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THE

HIGHLANDS AND WESTERN ISLES

OF

SCOTLAND,

CONTAINING

DESCRIPTIONS OF THEIR SCENERY AND ANTIQUITIES,

WITH AN ACCOUNT OF THE

POLITICAL HISTORY AND ANCIENT MANNERS,

AND OF THE

ORIGIN, LANGUAGE, AGRICULTURE, ECONOMY, MUSIC, PRESENT CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE, &c. &c. &c.

FOUNDED ON A

SERIES OF ANNUAL JOURNEYS BETWEEN THE YEARS 1811 AND 1821,

AND FORMING AN UNIVERSAL GUIDE TO THAT COUNTRY,

IN LETTERS TO

SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.

84762

BY

JOHN MACCULLOCH, M.D. F.R.S. L.S. G.S.
&c. &c. &c.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

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CLYDE, DUMBARTON, GREENOCK, HELENSBURGH, ROSNEATH, GARE LOCH, LOCH LONG, LOCH GOYL, HOLY LOCH, DUNOON, BUTE.

"GIVE me but a little leave," my dear Sir Walter, "and I will now set before your eyes the stupend infinite ocean, a sea full of rockes and shelves, sands, gulfes, Euripes, and contrary tides; full of fearful monsters, uncouth shapes, roring waves, tempests, and Siren calmes, and Halcyonian seas." The anchor is up, the fore sheet draws, the mainsail fills, and Ben Lomond is sinking in the blue horizon. Cato repented that he had gone by sea when he might have gone by land: what else he repented of, is too ungallant to be told. But had his journey lain from Cantyre to Cape Rath, he would have preferred the mountain wave to the mountain shore; a home on the deep, to the want of one among rocks and bogs, amid fords and ferries, through dub and learie and labour and starvation. You must now therefore prepare to accompany me over the rude billow, to plough the salt deep, dipping your wing in the wave, like the sea gull, by day, and, like him, seeking refuge from the storm and the night among the various and bright scenery of the western coast.

If a man had nothing else to do than to make tours, I know not where or how he could better spend his money and his time, than in wandering up and down and about the shores of the Clyde and those of all the lochs that open into it, and in ferreting out the endless corners and nooks

in which it abounds. Castles, towns, ships, islands, rocks, mountains, bays, creeks, rivers, cascades, trees, lakes, cliffs, forests, country seats, cultivation, what is there, in short, which may not be found on the shores of the Clyde, and what is there of all these which is not beautiful. Scotland has not such a house as Rosneath, and scarcely such a park as the park of Inveraray. Few of its towns are so beautifully situated as Greenock and Campbell-town, and not many of its sea lochs exceed Loch Long and Loch Fyne. Dumbarton Castle has not many equals, the Kyles of Bute resemble nothing on earth, Ailsa, is unmatched, perhaps in the world, and if Arran, in parts, has more than a rival in some parts of Sky, it has none, as a whole, throughout all the Western Islands. But every inch is beautiful, even from Dumbarton Castle to the Mull of Cantyre; nor is there a creek or a point in all this long space, that does not present something new and something attractive. He, however, who would see it as it deserves, must learn to be familiar with the shore, and must examine every thing as he would the alleys and walks in his own garden. It is not by blazing along in a steam boat, with the velocity of a rocket, that the beauties of the Clyde will be discovered.

If I were ever to turn printer's devil, I would manufacture a little book, and call it a guide to the beauties of the Clyde; for till that is done, nobody will think of looking at Arran or Ailsa, as they pass by. Even those whom the steam-boat compels to pause under the wonderful and towering colonnades of the latter, only say, "dear me—what a quantity of birds;" and if perchance residing a week at Brodick, it is only to discover how provokingly the bridge is placed, that compels them to go so far round. Thus also they pass through the fairy mazes of the Kyles of Bute, as they would through

the Monkland canal; because no one has ordered them to admire. But I have said more than once, that ninety-nine of an hundred among those who make tours, see nothing, unless their eyes are absolutely pushed into the show glass. Even then they scarcely know what they do see; and as to the general thousand, there are nine hundred and ninety-nine, to whom the world of landscape is a place to produce corn and potatoes, fatten bullocks, grow trees, maintain inns, and weary their horses. But this is no cause for surprise; still less for censure; as it is a natural consequence of confined habits and pursuits. Yet the principles of taste are often existing, though dormant, and a word is sufficient to rouse them. That word I long to give; that all may enjoy what nature has provided for all.

Though Dumbarton Castle is an ingredient in the ordinary route from Glasgow to Loch Lomond, forming an object deservedly the most admired, even where every thing is beautiful, it is not thoroughly seen unless viewed also from the water. From its double peak, it assumes various picturesque appearances when seen on these sides, and well deserves to be thoroughly studied at various distances, from the number of striking pictures which it yields. Nature seems to have done every thing to render this magnificent rock perfect in all its parts; and art has exerted a degree of ingenuity which is absolutely marvellous, to deform and mar it. Our beloved Scotia has certainly never been suspected of architectural taste, but, in Dumbarton Castle, she has really outdone herself. If the Governor's house would but crumble about his ears, it would be a day to be marked with a white stone; but unluckily it is founded on a rock. Were that rock conscious of the insult, it would apply to its neighbour Neptune for an earthquake, and, like a noble horse,

shake off the vile load that bestrides it. That this rock has once been an island, is apparent to a geological eye; and indeed we have positive evidence of this, as it is described by Harding, in 1434, as having been surrounded by the sea.

An ancient tower on the top of Dumbarton rock, is supposed to have been a Roman pharos, I know not with what truth; but the history of this place is almost too familiar to need repetition. It is said that it was a fort and garrison of the Strath-Cluyd Britons, from that period onwards, and that it was taken by starvation in 756, by the Saxon king of Northumberland. The celebrated escalade of 1571 is described in all the tour books, and why should I repeat these things for the twentieth time; or say what may be better found in Scottish history, or in those newspapers which held up this place as the rival to St. Helena, and as the retreat of a man to whose personal character and individual conduct Europe has been recently indebted, among much good, for more human suffering, perhaps, than it had experienced before him, since the days of Attila. If there is thus a visionary connection between one of the most wonderful men which the world has ever seen and the rock of Dumbarton, so it preserves the memory of another who has had the merit of making some noise in our own days at least, whatever he may have made in his own. Once more we have fallen on king Arthur, who, like Fingal, seems to pursue us wherever we go. Dumbarton Castle appears to have been the Castrum Arthuri, even before the time of our David; so that he is commemorated, not merely in Arthur's Seat and in the Cobler. Nor are even these his limits; as Arthur's Oven can testify, known by that name in the time of Alexander the second: while we have Arthur's fountain in Clydesdale, and Arthur Lee in

Renfrewshire; besides which, his memory is attached, in Angus, to more places than Meigle, since he is remembered at Cupar and at Dunnichen. There could not have been all this smoke without some fire; and if he "custodiebat le round table in Castro de Stirling, aliter Snowdoun West Castell," as William of Worcestre says, he must surely have figured as a living Arthur before he did in the Morte Arthur. Apropos to which, I see that Pennant must have learnt the tale of Meigle, and of Venora, or Guinever, from Boece; which I might have discovered before, if I had taken the trouble to look through all the pages of that worthy. Such it is to attempt to write without books. The view from the summit, extending towards Loch Lomond, is fine: and the huge mass of Ben Lomond is particularly striking to those who are, for the first time, meditating this expedition, and to whom its grey and misty summit, surrounded by the attendant mountains, and clad in colours of the air, promises delights yet untasted; unwitting how soon all that softness will be exchanged for rude heath and ruder rocks.

But I must not forget that I am in a boat, and on the Clyde, and I ought not to forget that I am under a compact not to step beyond the Highland boundary. Yet I cannot and will not pass Greenock, without saying that no one ought to pass it as if it were a mere receptacle of rum and sugar. It is a splendid sea-port, and it is no less beautifully situated: but to enjoy its picturesque beauties as they merit, it is necessary to ascend the heights above the town in various places. Hence, not only does the noble screen of the Argyllshire mountains increase in consequence, but the intricacy of its beautiful outline is augmented, by being thus elevated on the horizon, and by the introduction of new summits of hills, more and more distant, till they entirely vanish in the sky. These moun-

tains, as singular in character as they are grand and graceful, form a magnificent distance to a picture, in which the middle ground is occupied, first by the broad expanse of the Clyde, gay with shipping in every position and in every variety of form, and still nearer, by the port of Greenock, crowded with masts, and sails, and buildings; while the town itself, and the high rocky and wooded banks that tower above it, produce foregrounds as appropriate as they are various and picturesque. Those who may have expected to find it a kind of Wapping, deserve to be confined for their lives to that odoriferous region, if they leave Greenock with the same impression as they entered it.

The beauties of the shore on this side, whether along the road which is so judiciously conducted near the margin of the water, or from the water itself, are not often surpassed; while the whole coast, even as far as Largs, is varied by villages and houses, by ordinary marine villas or by rural ones of higher antiquity and claims, by wood and by cultivation, and by land of ever-changing forms. From a line of coast thus intricate, the Clyde, always spacious and always covered with its shipping, offers a scene of life and brilliancy, unparalleled on any of our sea shores, and enhanced by the majestic screen of mountains to the north, for ever varying under the changes of a restless atmosphere, but, under all these changes, for ever magnificent.

But I must return to my own side of the water, where the recent and gay town of Helensburgh offers the first object of attraction. This is one of the new bathing places which serves to mark the increasing opulence, as it does the increase of wants, and the increasing power of the imagination over those who have the means of indulging its vagaries. But the celebrated wells of Pan-

nanich, which we passed at Ballater without a notice, are a better proof of what can be done by the united impulse of water and the imagination. This has the reputation of being a mineral water; and, doubtless, answers the purpose quite as well; though Erra Pater himself, or Van Helmont, who was a better judge, would have been puzzled to say what it contains. Assuredly, the Highlanders who frequent it, do ample justice to its healing springs; for they sit from morning to night by the side of the wells, drinking as often as they can make room for a fresh supply. If a man's carcase is to be scoured of all diseases as you scour a house, their practice is perfect. You see that even Donald is not exempt from that disease of the imagination, the reverse of hydrophobia, which annually leads the citizens of Candlewick ward, and the weavers of Leeds, and the workers in brass and iron from Sheffield and Wales, and the spinners of cotton from Manchester and Glasgow, to Margate and Barmouth and Scarborough and Leamington and Buxton and Teignmouth and Sidmouth and Brighton, and Abergeley and Largs and Bute and Portobello and Bath and Cheltenham, and hither to Helensburgh; or wherever there is water to drink or water to swim in; since it seems indifferent whether this first of all elements, as Pindar calls it, is applied to the outside or the inside, to the stomach or the hide. And, at all these places, you may find them, (for the one is as good as the other,) picking cockleshells in the sand, riding on asses, raffling at libraries, reading novels, buying spars, wishing for dinner first and bed-time afterwards, and labouring, strenuâ inertiâ, to be happy; or to imagine themselves happy.

But this disease is as old at least as Pindar himself, and has classical authority in its favour; though the Cheltenham of the Greeks was under the conduct of

Hygeia instead of Mrs. Forty, and that Æsculapius presided in the place of Mr. Bettison or Beau Nash. It has a curious connection with old superstitions; like many other matters, of which the thread has been broken or lost. Gods and Nymphs presided over the fountains of Greece, and when these went out of fashion, their trade was taken up by Saints; just as the statues of Jupiter and Minerva became converted into those of St. Paul and the Virgin. The Saints too have had their day, and are out of date; except at Holywell, as Dr. Milner maintains; and the successors of Geber and Stahl are now the patrons of fountains and wells. We seek for salts now where we once prayed to saints, the apothecary has thrust himself into the place of St. Neot, and St. Tudy, and St. Fillan, and St. Collen ap Cowdra ap Caradog ap Freichfras ap Lleyr Merim ap Einion Yrth ap Cunedda Lledig, (he was a Welsh saint): and as the sacrifices of hecatombs were succeeded by pins, the latter have been superseded by fees and long bills, and by all the other sacrifices which he must make who would regale on the healing springs, wherever they lie; whether at the great Cloaca of the Eastern and Western Inds, or at the patrimony of St. Devi and king Bladud, and of the worshipful corporation of pottingars. It is amusing enough to observe the trouble which is taken to prove why this spring is good, that fountain healing: iron, when there is nothing else, or nothing at all, as at Pannanich; or gas, or some other thing; the unlucky saint who had the original merit, having been forgotten. The old philosophers, however, were more grateful to king Bladud, for they gave him the credit, even of the chemistry; making him a Santo and a Filosofo both, in spite of Giannone's axiom. "Two tunne there beth of brasse, And other two imaked of glas, Quick brimstone in them also, And other

things many mo, Sal albrod and sal alkine, Sal gemmæ is minged with him, And borneth by day and night"— and so forth; all laid in the ground by the Royal Chemist, for the benefit of mankind and the Bath Corporation. But it is all for the best; and if we can be cured by water, why should we swallow mercury and cantharides. Let Glasgow scower itself in peace. Let Donald drink of Pannanich till he bursts; for there, at least, he can drink for nothing.

The Gare Loch must not be passed in silence, as it affords much pleasing scenery from various points; receiving also a kind of dignity from the house of Ardencaple on one side, and from Rosneath on the other. The peculiar forms of the mountains which constitute this part of Argyllshire, are nowhere more striking than from the Gare Loch; Argyll's bowling green, as it is, catachretically, called, being the predominant feature. To be thoroughly understood, this inlet ought to be circumnavigated; but I cannot pretend to dwell on each particular scene. Those who are interested in speculating on the transmutations of lands near the sea, ought to examine a spit of shingle near the entrance of this inlet, which will lead them to some curious conclusions as to futurity. He would be a clever geologist, however, who could prove, retrospectively, that Rosneath had ever been an island. How it happened to be so in the days of Captain Knockdunder, is another matter. Loch Fyne presents a spit exactly similar, though much more extensive. Of Rosneath I need not say much. The new house, from the hands of an Italian architect, is unquestionably one of the most chaste and elegant specimens of modern architecture which Scotland has yet produced; but, in consequence of the situation of the ground, the home domain derives no peculiar interest from the mountain

scenery that surrounds it, and rather resembles an ordinary English park than such a place as Scotland might have had to boast.

The tower of Rosneath house has been condemned for its incongruity; and justly, as far as the question of congruity is concerned. But it is by no means clear, either that its effect is bad, or that the principle is faulty. Those who condemn the union of a Gothic castle-tower with a Greek building, forget how long they have tolerated or approved, or how they still tolerate and approve, a far greater solecism; the union of Greek details in a Gothic spire, and the application of such a structure to a Greek church. Our business, in this matter, has been, like ancient Rome and modern Italy, to recompose Greek principles into a new style. Every thing is incongruous, in a rigid sense, which has departed from the pure Doric temple. The Coliseum is an incongruity; the Pantheon is one; St. Paul's, still more. As long as this principle is admitted and adopted, there is no reason why we should not unite the castellated Gothic to the Greek, as well as the ecclesiastical Gothic: it being always provided that the union is rendered harmonious, that the lines and masses are well composed and united, and that the building does not appear a thing of shreds and patches. If this union appears to us to err now, it is from want of habit; and time will teach us, first to endure and then to approve.

A road from the Gare Loch leads to Arochar, partly on the side of Loch Long; but this was formerly mentioned, and belongs rather to the inland tour which includes Loch Lomond. Nor need a traveller cross any of the hill-roads which lead between Gare Loch, Loch Long, Loch Goyl, Loch Eck, and Inverara. In general, they offer no scenery to compensate for their inconvenience,

since many of them are scarcely fit, even for pony roads. Even the most arduous and ambitious tourist may abandon the whole of this interior mountain tract of Cowal without regret. Loch Eck is not worth the trouble of exploring; and as whatever beauty the country contains, is limited to its intricate sea shores, most of which are only accessible from the water, a boat, which is the most convenient mode of conveyance, will also be the most amusing and advantageous.

The entrance of Loch Long, for a considerable space, is pleasing, but without much character; and though all along its shores, for many miles upwards on both sides, the margins are generally picturesque, from intermingled rocks and woods, it scarcely presents any decided landscapes. In a fine day, it is however a very interesting navigation; for we must always recollect that there is often much beauty, even where we cannot lay our hands on any particular scene, or where the mere artist can find nothing. Where Loch Goyl branches off from Loch Long, the land is bold and fine; high rocky cliffs starting up immediately from the water, intermingled with shrubs and trees, and varied in a thousand beautiful and intricate modes. At the head of Loch Goyl also, there is much wild and romantic beauty; and beyond it, the deep rude valley called Hell's Glen, will not be deficient in attractions to those who are pleased with Glencro; since it equals, or perhaps exceeds, that well-known place, in wildness and character. But the principal feature in Loch Goyl is Carrick Castle, an ancient seat of the Dunmore family, and, even now, a very perfect ruin. The disposition of the building is sufficiently picturesque, and it is situated in a most favourable manner on a nearly insulated and high rock advanced into the water; the mountains above impending in very fine forms, and the

shore being enriched by noble trees of ancient growth, skirting some beautifully situated farms, where cultivation and houses add much to the interest and variety of this attractive landscape. The opposite sides of the loch are here also particularly fine. Hence to the exit of Loch Long into the Clyde, the shore, on this side, continues to be marked by much variety and grandeur; the hills, in many parts, sweeping up in such a manner that the eye traces them from the water even to the sky, often covered with houses and trees and wild forest wood, in other places richly cultivated, and presenting, moreover, some noble and extensive park scenery, if it may be so called, appertaining to Ardentenny and the adjoining lands.

The inn at the Strone ferry, situated on the shore, at the foot of the wild and bold hill that separates Loch Long from the Holy Loch, is a convenient place of refuge. Whoever may make this nautical expedition, should land here; that by gaining the high ground where it is so easily accessible, he may command the views of the Clyde and the hilly country around. It is often necessary to land for the same purpose in many other places; as from so low a position as the water necessarily gives, much beauty will otherwise be unavoidably overlooked. The Holy Loch penetrates but a short way into the mountains; but they rise high from it on all sides, while the cultivation and population of its shores, added to the fine wood and the coppices which skirt the declivities of the hills, render it a scene alike ornamental and unexpected. The name has probably been derived from Kilmun, near the upper extremity, once a collegiate church, and built by Sir Duncan Campbell in 1442. That, however, no longer exists; but this spot is the burial place of the Argyll family. The architecture of this mausoleum is nothing, it being an ugly square tower; and though at a

distance, some expectations of picturesque beauty are formed from the trees with which it is surrounded, added to those ideas which such an object, situated in a spot so remote and so romantic, cannot fail to excite, that disappears on a nearer examination.

In contemplating these places of sepulture in the Highlands, all the surrounding scenery seems to take a a character from this principal object, as if the whole was one wide and romantic mausoleum. In this spot, the presence of houses and of the living, injure, it is true, but they do not destroy this effect. It is as if the dead had appropriated to themselves the silent expanse of the water, the vast concave of the hills, and the wild woods that hang on their sides, or fling their branches over the sea wave. All the traces of life, all works of art, all cultivation, seem an intrusion on their rights, and every noise appears to be an infringement on the sepulchral solemnity of the scene. It is true that we have been taught to laugh at the man who chooses a particular spot for his burial place, on account of the beauty of the view. But any kind of choice in this matter is equally ludicrous. The bull, such as it may be, is, in all cases, only greater or less. Yet every one would prefer a quiet country church-yard to the Strand, or a grave in the earth to one in an anatomist's bottle. The Norwegian lady who chose to be buried on the top of a mountain in Sky, could not, certainly, see across the waves of her dominion to the wild shores of her native land. But the choice is at least consolatory in life; and what more is posthumous fame, for which we all labour in our several ways. We shall hear as little of our praises hereafter, as the Duke of Argyll's ancestors now see of the beauties of the Holy Loch. But there is no reasoning about matters of this nature. Often as I thought to have been drowned among

the Western Islands, it was always a consolation to think that I might be buried under the altar of Iona by the side of the Abbot Mac Kinnon, that future geologists should discuss the granite of my tomb, and that some botanist, kneeling to examine the moss that grew on my grave, should say, as may hereafter be said of Scroggins or Molyneux,—here lies a victim to science.

From the Holy Loch to Toward Point, is a coast, generally bold and high, often wooded to the water's edge, but varied in many parts by lower shores, by intricate and rocky creeks, by the entrance of rivers or the fall of cascades, and by farms, houses, and population. As, to describe it in detail would be endless, I shall only notice the romantic village of Dunoon, placed under the hill, and advancing into the sea on a green irregular tract of beautiful land. This spot possesses the merit of historical interest to enhance its natural beauties; and there is enough yet remaining to indicate the situation of its ancient castle. It was one of the places which made a conspicuous figure in the reign of David the second, when a series of actions was carried on in the Clyde, in which Arran and Bute were also included. In 1334, the castle, then in possession of the English, was surprised by Sir Colin Campbell of Lochow, and the garrison was slaughtered. This event roused Arran and Bute, so that the English garrisons were there also put to the sword; Rothsay being taken, with the death of Sir Alan Lyle, and Sir John Gilbert being made prisoner.

I wish some one would teach Scottish heritors and Scottish masons two things; the one, that building is not architecture, and the other, that taste need cost nothing. To a want of this knowledge, saving knowledge as well as ornamental, are we indebted for the deformity of Dunoon church, as well as for an hundred other evils

of the same kind, which everywhere encumber the land. Doubtless, the heritors of Dunoon considered that they had done a most laudable deed, and had committed a great act of taste, when they put their hands into their pockets to enable a detestable mason to pile stone on stone till he had gained the weathercock of Dunoon steeple. Far better would it have been to have kept their money quiet, and have suffered the unmeaning, inoffensive barn to rise, with its little unpretending chimney of a belfry, and its solitary green copper kettle. A blank is, at all times, better than a fault, and vacancy cannot at least offend. But what can we expect at Dunoon, when our hair is ready to stand on end at every turning of a corner in Edinburgh; not at the Tron church and the chapel in York Place alone. Glasgow ought to have breathed something of taste over the Clyde; but if it has had no other influence than it has exerted over Dunoon, the Adamses and Stark have laboured in vain. There have been some successful attempts made, of late, in Edinburgh, that is certain; and there is a daily promise of more and better; bidding fair to make its architecture all that its wonderful situation merits and claims. But it is a long step between reforming a town and reforming the public taste. If I were, however, to say more on this subject, or adduce examples, I should affront three fourths of the architects, and perhaps somewhat too many others of our tender nation: so I must leave it to those who may have no such fears, to explain why, with so much of real architectural taste displayed all over England, with which they are as familiar as Englishmen, with so many good specimens in their own country, and with education similar and equal to that of the English, the gentlemen of the thistle should have so long remained almost as insensible and as unconcerned on this subject as they were in the days of Robert Bruce.

As we need not, however, be so very tender towards the mason who built Dunoon, or to the general races of country heritors and country masons, we may ask the former personages why, when they have manfully determined to spend an unnecessary sum of money in ornament, they will not render that ornament ornamental. Taste, I may repeat it, in this case, costs nothing. No one asks for mouldings and mullions and crockets and finials, no one wishes the money to be spent in carving and flowering; for all the fillagree in the world will never make an ill-formed or an ill-drawn building beautiful. All that is asked for, in the case of these parish churches, is design; some attention to graceful forms and proportions. What is really necessary as pure ornament, is attended with very little expense; and much more is commonly spent, in this very manner, in producing positive deformity. The same quantity of labour, the same measurement of stone and lime, will cost no more in a beautiful form than in an ugly one: proportion and design measure for nothing under the surveyor's rod; for there are, in both cases, but so many cubic feet of solid masonry, and so many superficial ones of chiselling. But it is far from a matter of indifference, as to the effect, how these are disposed. To produce beauty from a heap of rude materials, is the office of taste; and it is a proof of true taste to effect its purpose without superfluous expense. Beauty consists in the design, and the design, let me repeat it again, costs nothing. The expense of Waterloo and Westminster bridges may be taken as the same; but what is the relative produce in the two cases. Put the same question for the Opera house and the new buildings at Chester, money for money and stone for stone; or between the Horse Guards and the new Custom House; or, in twenty other cases that might be named.

If the country heritors of Scotland are to be thus liberal in wishing and trying to rescue their new churches from disgrace, and if they will but reflect that it is barely possible they may have no taste of their own, and that a country mason is likely to have much less, why will they not spend ten pounds more on a good drawing. There is no want of models, in England at least; nor any want of talent, either in England or Scotland; and they may still build at the same price. When once they have condescended to render the house of the Lord respectable, they may as well proceed one step further; for architectural beauty is no profanation. I wish I could say that this had been attempted oftener; but I could point out at least two specimens, where tasteful designs on a small scale have been erected within the limits of the funds allowed, and where, without such designs, the usual results would have followed. I do not say that either of them are perfect specimens of architecture; but they are far different from the common attempts at beauty in our country churches. But I must not write an essay on this subject. Yet I may add, that when, on a far greater scale than that which led to these remarks, money is to be expended in so liberal a manner as it has lately been at Alloa, and, I may also say, at Dumfermline, it is alike lamentable and discreditable, that wanton or ignorant architects should depart from those models from which they borrow, by the introduction of styles and ornaments so utterly inconsistent with them, and, what is far worse, at variance in themselves with every principle of taste or beauty. He was no common wit who introduced the name of Robert Bruce into the last mentioned of these churches. Had that great king been an architect, it might have disturbed the very bones that are sleeping below.

There is some pleasing scenery hence onwards, ac-

cessible also by a road along the shore; and at one point, the ruined castle of Knockamily gives it an additional interest. But the coast becomes comparatively uninteresting and low near Toward Point, where the light-house is placed, and continues the same towards the entrance of Loch Straven, after having been unusually beautiful for some space before; the steep declivities of the hills descending into the sea, and being covered with wood to the water's edge, for a considerable space between this point and Dunoon. The light on Toward Point is the third from Pladda, and one of the four which serve for the navigation of the Clyde; the Cloch, and that on the little Cumbray, being the other two: and its main use is to prevent vessels mistaking the Channel of Bute for the right course, as that on the Cumbray directs them to avoid the sound between Bute and Arran.

It was off this point that I met with an example of those extraordinary winds which I have so frequently observed in the Western Islands, and which are far more common everywhere than is generally imagined; seamen and philosophers appearing alike to have neglected them, because always supposing that wind necessarily moved in a straight direction and in considerable masses or streams. As I was standing down along this shore with a fresh breeze, I almost brushed yards with another vessel which was standing up in the opposite direction, and with a wind exactly the reverse of our own. Nor could I observe that there was any smooth water between us; so that here, at the same moment, there were two opposite and powerful currents of wind, in contact with each other. But this was only half of the phenomenon; as on rounding the point, I found other vessels standing down the sound of Bute on the very same tack, also under a fresh breeze, since they had all taken in their gaff topsails; while from

the Ayrshire coast, others again were standing up for this very sound, and with a wind exactly the reverse of that which was blowing down it from the north-west. Thus, at the same instant, there were four distinct winds blowing from four opposite quarters of the compass; nor could I be mistaken in the observation, because, being much puzzled at first with what the seamen themselves scarcely knew how to believe, I landed on the point for the purpose of observing it at my leisure, which I did for the space of two hours. I may also add, that my vessel, which I had left, and my own boat, sailed through every one of these winds. It was very amusing to observe the several ways in which the vessels from different quarters were taken aback on entering a new current; but I had occasion to regret that the lateness of the evening prevented me from examining the state of the atmosphere at the point of general intersection, which seemed to lie about half way between the great Cumbray and Toward Point.

The town of Rothsay, though not very elegant, is populous and busy, and will form a convenient head quarter for those who may chuse to visit Bute itself and the surrounding scenery. Roads in sufficient number, render it very easy to traverse the island in all directions. As the length of Bute is about eighteen miles and its breadth about four, it includes a considerable territory; but two thirds at least of this space is mountain pasture, the mountainous tract lying north of a line drawn between Rothsay and Scalspie bay. The two lakes, Loch Fad and Loch Stuck, situated in the valley which intersects the island from Rothsay, are too naked, at present, to merit attention; but had this part of the island been chosen for the plantations of Mount Stewart, they would have formed highly ornamental objects in its pleasure

grounds. Excepting this park, the southern part of the island, from Rothsay to Kilchattan Bay, offers no picturesque features; except on the sea shores, which present considerable variety, and are, at the same time, generally accessible, by means of a road conducted near the margin of the water and under the high land. Nevertheless, the appearance of the island is everywhere pleasing; while the facility with which it may be traversed in any direction, adds much to its attractions.

A tract, consisting of a sea marsh and a sandy flat, separates the Garroch Head from the main part of Bute; leaving no doubt that the former was once a distinct island. This is, in every respect, a most singular spot; and no less unexpected than it is romantic and unlike to any thing else, on this or on any other coast. Ben Varagen, its highest hill, is an admirable station for a general view of the Clyde and of the whole country on both sides. To the north, it looks over the island of Bute and to the mass of the Argyllshire mountains, which, piled over each other till they vanish in air, here occupy the horizon. To the south, and on each side, is displayed the beautiful expanse of the Clyde, alive with a perpetual succession of shipping; while, to the eastward, the view is bounded by the two Cumbrays and the coast of Ayrshire. Arran is here a peculiarly fine object; the whole of its mountain district being displayed in a magnificent manner, and conveying a more perfect idea of the grandeur of this tract, than can be obtained from any other position. The remainder of the Garroch Head is a collection of steep and narrow ridges, placed in a parallel manner, and separated by deep and solitary valleys; each ridge being crowned by precipices of naked rock, and the whole diversified by other unexpected recesses, and, sometimes, by small lakes. If such materials do not promise much

in the name, the fault is in the want of expressive terms; as the consequence of them is a collection of the most singularly romantic and secluded scenes, wanting only the aid of a few trees and a little art, to render them as beautiful as they are extraordinary. The west shore of Bute, from the Garroch Head to Etrick Bay, is more picturesque and various than the east side for the same distance, but is not so convenient of access. A boat, however, renders every thing easy, and will be found the best method of visiting this side of the island. On the east side, from Rothsay to the Kyles, there is not only an excellent road at the foot of the ridge and close to the margin of the sea, but that shore forms, in itself, a beautiful walk. Kaims' bay and castle will necessarily attract attention; but though, in the interior of the mountainous tract, there are some farms pleasingly situated in the high valleys, and chiefly towards the west, the trouble of rambling over these mountains will scarcely be repaid.

The ancient and royal castle of Rothsay is the only antiquity of note in the island, and is situated close to the town. It will disappoint him who expects to find it a picturesque or a beautiful object, as it is lamentably deficient in both these qualities. The red colour of its stone is no less inimical to beauty than its round heavy shape; and though some fine ash trees, rising out of the ruins, give it all the aid they can, they are insufficient to redeem its ponderous and dull form. It has had a ditch, and has been a strong place, as far as high and thick walls can make a place strong. But as a piece of fortification, even on the ancient principles, it is wretchedly deficient, and argues very little in favour of the military knowledge that directed it. Even the gate is neither flanked nor machicolated; and it might have been mined or assaulted at almost any point. It is the only

instance of the round construction that I have seen in Scotland; and resembles, more than any others, the castle of Restormel in Cornwall, and that of Trematon near Plymouth. The chief difference consists in the round towers which Rothsay possesses at the sides. The great court, like that of Usk, is circular.

It has been the work however of different times, and the entrance was added by Robert the third, who sometimes resided here. But the first foundation is not known; and there is, indeed, a good deal of obscurity about the early history of Bute in general. Before the time of Alexander the third, it is supposed to have belonged to a family called Mac Roderick; and, in Haco's first expedition, it was attacked by the Norwegians with eighty ships; led by Rudri, or Roderick, one of this family. Rothsay castle, (whether the present building or not, is uncertain,) was then besieged, and taken by a sap and assault, with the loss of 300 men; the Steward of Scotland, then the proprietor by a marriage with the Mac Roderick family, being also killed. In 1334 it was seized by Edward Baliol, in 1544 it was taken by Lord Lennox, and, lastly, it was burnt by the Marquis of Argyll in Charles's wars, in 1685. Such is a sketch of the military history of Rothsay castle; to which there seems to have been attached an importance, at various times, which is not easily understood, until we recollect the desultory species of warfare, or, more properly, of marauding, which was carried on in those days.

From Rothsay, it is but a short distance into Loch Straven, which may also be visited in making the passage through the Kyles of Bute. This is a spacious inlet; and from the breadth and extent of the water, and the simplicity and height of the mountain boundary, the first impression derived from it is rather grand. But

nothing more is obtained by coasting its shores; as it is deficient in ornament and variety, and affords therefore no picturesque scenes. Nor is there any thing very interesting in the passage of the Kyles, until we begin to approach the ferry. The long vista of this narrow strait is here striking; overshadowed, as it were, by the high ranges of hills which rise from the water on each hand, expanding at one extremity into the spacious sound of Rothsay, and, on the other, losing itself amid rocks and woods, as if all further progress was at an end. Though the passage of the Kyles is everywhere interesting, it is more particularly beautiful between this ferry and the entrance of Loch Ridan, where it is contracted as well as varied, by four islands. These, and the forms of the land on both sides, render the passage so narrow and intricate, that, for a considerable space, it seems to be at an end, repeatedly, in working through it. It is the same indeed for nearly four miles through this intricate and narrow strait; the land closing in, in such a manner, as to appear to meet from the opposite sides. Thus while, in some places, we feel as if passing through the labyrinths of an alpine river, in others we appear to be enclosed within a lake. It is only by the fall and rise of the tide and the appearance of the sea weeds on the rocks, that we are led to suspect the maritime nature of this channel; since it is so far removed from the sea, and so involved in all that class of ornament and scenery which we are accustomed to associate with fresh water, that it is scarcely possible to divest ourselves of the idea of being in an inland lake. At the same time, it is no less beautiful than extraordinary; the land rising suddenly and high from the water, often into lofty cliffs interspersed and varied with wood, the trees growing from the fissures of the rocks even at the very margin of the sea, and aid-

ing, with the narrowness of the strait and the height of the land, to produce a sober, green, shadowy tone of forest scenery, which adds much to the romantic effect of this fairy-like sea.

The entrance of Loch Ridan partakes of the same character; and though these particular features disappear after a short space, this inlet continues to be beautiful for many miles upwards into Glen Daruel; a good road being conducted by its margin, through woods, for some time, till it reaches the opener valley. It is a spot which a tourist should by no means pass unnoticed, and which, at high water, may be entered very far in a boat.

Eilan-gherrig, at the entrance of Loch Ridan, is a spot of historical celebrity, having been fortified by the unlucky Archibald Duke of Argyll, in 1685. But having been attacked by three or four ships of the fleet, he thought fit to make his escape and the works were surrendered. As the sound on the west side enlarges after quitting the Kyles, the interest of the scenery diminishes; though it still continues pleasing, till, by reaching the open space between Lamont Point and Etrick Bay, the elevation of the land, on both sides, becomes so far lowered as to destroy its characteristic features. Inch Marnoch here forms an object, of considerable magnitude at least, since it is a hill of two miles in length; but it is without any attractive features. Like many parts of Bute, it contains slate quarries, and possesses some remains of a chapel that is said to have been a cell dependant on the monastery of Lamlash.

ARRAN. LAMLASH.

No page of Highland geography has been more thumbed than that of Arran; but it has been by geologists only. No one has yet condescended to inform those who travel for mere amusement, that this island, one of the most accessible spots in the Highlands, is also one of the most romantic and picturesque. Very many years indeed have not passed, since it was as little known to the world at large as Sky and Lewis; and since its manners and its people were even more rude, and its system more antiquated, though situated at the very doors of commerce and civilization. But its agricultural arrangements have been recently altered, and the effects thence produced have been further and rapidly accelerated, by that which has already so powerfully operated on the most remote shores of the Clyde Highlands, namely the establishment of steam boats; an invention which bids fair to produce, in a few more years, a change that a century might not otherwise have accomplished. But as I have elsewhere entered on these subjects, I shall here make only one remark, and that, chiefly for the sake of those who have so often and so angrily written in defence of the ancient Highland tenantry and of the ancient system of tenure. Till the very moment of reform, as is matter of universal notoriety, with a numerous population, with considerable agricultural capability and with much greater capacity for a system of improved pasturage, with a sea abounding in white fish of all kinds, pe-

culiarly well situated moreover for the herring fishery of the Clyde and of Loch Fyne, with the best and most frequented harbour on the west of Scotland, and in the very centre of markets and civilization, Arran was one universal scene of neglected tillage and neglected fisheries, of idleness, poverty and profligacy; with ruinous huts where it ought to have had houses, and wretched villages where it might have maintained towns. Such as this island then was, have all the Highlands in their turn been, at least in most points; and such, and worse, might they have remained for ever, had these romantic personages been allowed to dispose of the property and happiness of a nation, for the gratification of a few visionary and idle fancies. The Duke of Hamilton, and the other proprietors, in adopting wiser views, have added no less to the happiness and virtue of their people than to their own estates.

Though Arran is, in every sense, a hilly island, its character is, in this respect, unequal, and, in the northern and southern halves, strongly contrasted. The high and serrated forms of the northern division are peculiarly striking; presenting a rugged mountainous character unequalled in Scotland, except by the Cuchullin hills in Sky. These mountains are also exceedingly elegant in the outline: and though not attaining to quite 3000 feet of elevation, yet, from their independence and from their rising immediately out of the sea, their alpine effect is equalled by that of very few mountainous tracts in Scotland, of even much greater altitude. The southern hilly division is a tame undulating land without features, and there are not many parts which are strictly level, except in the Machrie glen on the west side, and on the shores of Brodick Bay. Though the shores are generally rocky, and commonly steep, they rarely rise into cliffs; but, in most places, the hills spring at once from the sea; leaving,

however, a narrow belt of flat and green land in many places, which forms a natural road of communication nearly all round the island. This road constitutes a very striking character in Arran, as it does also in Bute: and, to the visiter, it is peculiarly agreeable, from its beauty, and from the access it affords to the various picturesque scenes of the island, which are chiefly found on its sea margin.

Of the two attached islands, Pladda is a small and flat islet with a rocky boundary, remarkable for nothing but its light-house. Lamlash, on the contrary, is interesting; as well for the beauty of its conical form, rising to a thousand feet, as for the view from its summit, and the striking character of its columnar cliffs. The ascent is rendered peculiarly laborious; no less from the steepness and irregularity of the ground, than from the tangled growth of the Arbutus uva ursi by which it is covered. The whole surface scarcely bears any other plant than this beautiful trailing shrub; peculiarly beautiful when its bright scarlet berries are present to contrast with the rich dark green of its elegant foliage. The columnar cliffs, which lie on the east side, though having no pretensions to the regularity of Staffa, are still picturesque, and are free from the stiffness too common in this class of rock; consisting of various irregular stages piled on each other, broken, and intermixed with ruder masses of irregular rocks, and with verdure and shrubs of humble growth. Beneath, a smooth and curved recess in a mass of sandstone, produces that species of echo which occurs in the whispering gallery of St. Paul's, and in other similar situations.

There are no ruins now to be traced in Lamlash; but Dean Monro says that it had "ane *monastery* of friars," founded by John, Lord of the Isles, "which is decayit."

That was in 1594; and what was then decayed, has now disappeared. He calls the island Molass; and it is pretended that there was a cave, or hermitage, inhabited by a Saint Maol Jos, who is buried at Shiskin, on the south side of Arran. It is further said that there was once a castle here, built by Somerlid. The Bay of Lamlash forms an admirable harbour: spacious, and fit for ships of any dimensions, with excellent holding ground and a double entrance. It is subject to squalls, but not to a dangerous degree. The village of Kilbride is mean, and offers no attraction of any kind, though there are some trees round it towards the land: and hence an excellent road conducts across the hill to Brodick; as a way may also be found round the shore, beneath the cliffs, to the same place.

Brodick, though offering an indifferent harbour, contains a pier for boats and small vessels, and is the principal village of the island. It is admirably adapted for a summer bathing quarter, and is likely to become so, now that this fashion is so rapidly extending over all the villages and towns of the Clyde. The beauty of the situation is scarcely exceeded by that of any sea shore in Scotland; while its comfort as a residence is equal to its beauty; being unencumbered with enclosures, and admitting of walks and rides in all directions, through the most various and picturesque scenes, with free access to the sea, and to a sea of which the shores are everywhere beautifully varied. From the bay, an open space of green land, intersected by a winding river and planted with trees, extends inwards; communicating with the different roads, and branching into the rude and wild valleys of Glen Shira, Glen Rossie, and Glen Cloy. Over this space, the houses and cottages are irregularly dispersed, at wide distances from each other; rivulets,

rocks, bridges, mills, and trees, adding to the picturesque confusion, which is also much embellished by numerous boats, drawn up on the green, or lying on the shore, or anchored in the bay. To the north, Brodick Castle, shrouded in its fine woods, forms the boundary of this beautiful amphitheatre; while, high above, towers the elegant, conical, and rocky outline of Goatfell. Every variety of landscape is united in this extraordinary spot. The rural charms of the ancient English village, unrestricted in space and profuse of unoccupied land, are joined to the richness of cultivation, and contrasted with the wildness of moorland and rocky pasture. On one hand is the wild mountain torrent, and on another, the tranquil river meanders through the rich plain. Here the sea curls on the smooth beach, and there it foams against a rocky shore, or washes the foot of the high and rugged cliffs, or the skirts of the wooded hill. The white sails of boats are seen passing and repassing among trees, the battlements of the castle, just visible, throw an air of ancient grandeur over the woods, and, united to this variety, is all the sublimity and all the rudeness of the alpine landscape which surrounds and involves the whole.

Near the entrance of Glen Shira and Glen Rossie, many wild and romantic scenes occur; as well as on the acclivities of the hills in various quarters, and indeed from almost every point about or in this bay. But beyond the entrance of Glen Rossie, all beauty ceases; being replaced by wildness without magnificence, as is the case in the two other valleys that branch off from Brodick Bay. The Castle of Brodick is one of the very few ancient buildings of this class which are still inhabited; but its features are not, abstractedly, picturesque, however valuable it may be as an object in the landscape.

Its ancient history is more interesting, from its having been the scene of some of the adventures belonging to the contests of Bruce. It was held by Sir J. Hastings in 1306, and surprised by the partisans of the King. It is described by Fordun as being a Royal castle, together with that in Loch Ranza, in 1380; but in 1456, it was demolished by the Earl of Ross, and afterwards rebuilt by James the fifth.

The ascent to the top of Goatfell is gentle and easy, and will well repay the visiter. Yet though the horizon is extensive, the distant view is less interesting than would be expected; less various, and less marked by objects of decided character than might have been anticipated from the geography. Though the eye ranges, even to the Paps of Jura, and over all the mountains of Cantyre and Cowal, including also in the circuit the coast of Ayrshire and the bright inlets of Loch Fyne and of the Clyde, the land is so distant as to be confounded in a general insipidity of outline. But the mountain itself recompenses the spectator for the tameness of the distant view: being unlike every other in Scotland, from its bold spires of naked grey rock, from the depths of the valleys which meet at its summit branching far away into shadowy obscurity, and from the huge and naked precipices around, impending over an abyss whose silence is only disturbed by the sound of the breeze or of the distant waterfall, and which even the light of noon-day never reaches. It is not difficult, from this point, to descend into Glen Rossie or Glen Sanicks; though the latter valley may also, and with more convenience, be visited by entering from its mouth, from the sea shore. It is equally easy, when on the summit of Goatfell, to cross to Ben Huish and Ben Breach, and thus to visit the two small mountain lakes, Loch Jorsa and Loch Tana, terminating the day's

journey at Loch Ransa. Nor is this walk uninteresting, to those who know the pleasure of a mountain expedition; when, the summit once attained and the labour surmounted, they may enjoy in purity, and without the alloy of weariness and toil, those delights which are experienced on high elevations.

I have often before had occasion to notice the acuteness of Donald, and, on this subject, I was much amused with a sort of guiding personage whom I met here. He had just before attended a noted dignitary with a large wig, whose name I must not tell you, to the top; and though his duller partner seemed to think that the mountain had never borne such a burden since the days of Fingal, I found that my more philosophical friend, however he might honour the wig, was inclined to give it but a wig's worth of respect, and no more. I put the question extraordinary to him, that I might get at the cause of his heterodoxy and contempt, and was not much surprised to find that Dugald Macalister treated the adventitious matter of the Reverend Doctor, precisely as so much goats' hair and pomatum deserved. "Was the Doctor acquainted with the etymology of Goatfield." —"Na."—"Its height."—"Na."—"Its length; its breadth."—"Na."—Did he know the rare plants which grew on it."—"Na; he was nae botanist."—"But he measured its altitude."—"Na; he was na a mathematician."—"Then he had a hammer, and looked at the rocks."—"Na; he was nae mineralogist."—"Then he made a drawing."—"Na; he could not draw."—"Then he admired the views."—"Na; he only glowred a little."—"And when he arrived at the top."—"Why then he said it was very cauld and that he was wearied."—"Then perhaps he quoted some Greek, about Olympus and Parnassus."—"Na; he said it was time to gang down and see about

the dinner."—"But he asked about the agriculture of Arran, or the population, or the wealth, or the morals, or the habits; or, as he was a Divine, about the religion of the country people."—"Na, na."—"About the antiquities."—"Na, na, na."—"Then, as he was a scholar, he asked about the language, about the Gaelic."—"Na——a."—"Then what did he do."—"He just went down again." Dugald Macalister seemed to think that a man might have done as much without a large wig. Poor Dugald; he did not know that "a great place strangely qualifies." "Let the King make me," a man with a large wig, "and I would fain see him that durst tell me there is any thing I understand not."

Those who may traverse these hills in summer, when the water of the mountain streams is uncontaminated with peat, will be struck by its beautiful green colour, no less than by its brilliant transparency. This is an appearance rarely seen, and only rendered visible here, by the whiteness of the granite channels in which it flows. With a depth of ten or twelve feet, the colour is a strong sea green, and it is sensible, even with two or three. It resembles the colour of the sea most exactly, and is quite equal to it in intensity. So seldom is this appearance to be seen, that it has been almost overlooked: few having suspected that fresh water possessed any colour, except in some such remarkable instances as that of the Rhone at Geneva. In ordinary cases of lakes and rivers, it is invisible, merely because it is obscured by the dark transmitted colour of the bottom, or by contamination from the stain of peat or of clay. Thus the green colour of the sea is also obscured in similar cases; being seen in greatest perfection, only when on a sandy bottom, or when light is transmitted through the edge of a wave, or where the white foam of a breaker shines through a

surging sea. In a similar case, the green colour of fresh water is detected in the foam of a cascade, and from the same cause; when it was invisible in the river running quietly over a bed of dark rocks. In our seas at least, as well as in our fresh waters, green is therefore the natural colour; and that this is not the consequence of any matter held in solution, is easily proved. But it remains to be explained why there are such exceptions as that of the Rhone just mentioned; why any water is blue, or why it should possess two distinct colours in different situations; these, it is scarcely necessary to say, being quite independent of reflection from the sky. In the ocean, the sea is often blue, but not universally so; and it also happens that blue and green zones will succeed each other. But near the land, it is, I believe, invariably green. It has been thought that this depended on the presence of minute animals, or of animal matter. Yet that cannot be the necessary or the only cause; as green water may often be found on our own shores, absolutely free from either animaculæ or animal contamination. I dare not here enter any further into this piece of philosophy, as it would lead me too far.

He who is content to admire beauty which is not productive of many decided landscapes, will find ample subjects of gratification in a walk along the shore, from Brodick to Loch Ransa; unparalleled for its singularity, and not often equalled in beauty. That in the opposite direction, affords attractions chiefly to the geologist: but the whole island is a mine of geology and mineralogy. As far as Corry, the road is conducted over one of those remarkable flat and green tracts formerly noticed; the sea washing the rocky and varied shore to the right, and the skirts of the mountain on the left descending in irregular rocky cliffs, planted with wild trees and brush-

wood. Houses and cottages add to the variety, which is also increased by the occasional fall of mountain torrents, the opening of cultivated valleys and farms, and by glimpses of the towering summits of the mountains above. It is this peculiar mixture of rural and maritime objects, which renders the shores and cliffs of Arran so different from most others; the trees which adorn them growing down to the water's edge, as on the borders of an inland lake; and every nook and cranny into which the sea flows, admitting access to its margin, and displaying some peculiar beauty. It is seldom indeed that we can trace the very break of the last wave on the shore, as may be done in Arran, for so many miles, and along a series of objects which, whether great or minute, are always, either picturesque, or amusing and ornamental. When a sea shore cannot be thus traced, as is by far the most common state of things, the sea, though present, loses half its value; and when it can only be followed on a flat monotonous beach of sand or shingle, it offers no enticement. Here, the access is almost everywhere perfect, and the variety is as endless as it is unexpected and engaging.

The works of Corry render it a lively and pleasing scene; and so extensive are the excavations of the quarries, as to produce subterraneous pictures not exceeded by many natural caverns. Beyond this little village, the same amusing road is continued along the shore, but varied even more, by the more perfect view of the mountains. The acute and rocky pyramid of Kid Voe, offers a peculiarly striking object; giving rise to many remarkable alpine scenes, and somewhat resembling parts of the famed scenery of Glenco. With the exception, indeed, of Coruisk in Sky, of this last named valley, and of some of the scarcely accessible glens that

lie about the sources of the Dee, Scotland contains no scenery that can be compared, in this style, with that which occurs in these mountain valleys of Arran. They have the superior merit of being more easily accessible than most of those, though they must still be explored on foot.

Glen Sanicks, as it is the most striking, is also the most accessible of these; but it must be followed to the very extremity, even till it rises up towards the summit of Goatfell, as its chief interest lies in that part. But this is landscape beyond the reach of art. It is the sublime of magnitude, and simplicity, and obscurity, and silence. Possessing no water, except the mountain torrents, it is far inferior to Coruisk in variety; equally also falling short of it in grandeur and diversity of outline. It is inferior too in dimensions, since that part of it which admits of a comparison, does not much exceed a mile in length. But, to the eye, that difference of dimension is scarcely sensible; since here, as in that valley, there is no scale by which the magnitude can be determined. The effect of vacancy united to vastness of dimension is the same in both: there is the same deception, at first, as to the space; which is only rendered sensible by the suddenness with which we lose sight of our companions, and by the sight of unheard torrents. Perpetual twilight appears to reign here, even at mid-day: a gloomy and grey atmosphere uniting, into one visible sort of obscurity, the only lights which the objects ever receive, reflected from rock to rock, and from the clouds which so often involve the lofty boundaries of this valley.

It is that awful kind of silence and repose which is here experienced, which constitutes the main part of that complicated sensation which every one has felt when alone on the mountain summit, and which wastes itself

in words when we attempt to describe it. If silence is one great source of the sublime, there must be superadded, space, or multitude, or power, or some other adjunct, which may prove it to be a positive, not a negative quality. Mere silence is nothing: it is active silence, if such an expression may be used, which is the sublime of stillness and repose. Hence the effect of the dark forest and the wide spread ocean, of the blue expanse, the solemn cathedral, or the impending ruin. Hence the tremendous silence when thousands are attending the last act of law. It is awful, because it is accompanied by power: this is positive silence. Hence, in another way, the profound silence of Milton's evening.—"Silence accompanied, for beast and bird;" This is power suppressed. It is this feeling, as of power restrained, which produces the death-like stillness of the mountain summit; when towns and forests and animals are spread far and wide beneath us, but when the ear catches no sound of life or motion. It is this suppression of power which constitutes the horror and the awe that precede the volcano, the hurricane, and the earthquake. Analogous to this is the terrific stillness of the abandoned field of battle, of the wide darkness of night; and similar too is the fearful repose of the grave. If the silence of nature is majestic, if her tranquillity is terrible, it is because that silence is contrasted by her power. Thus also it is in the moral world. It is the silence that would speak, which is awful: it is the suppression of sentiment, not its absence, which produces the moral sublimity of silence. Such is the silence of the shade of Ajax when addressed by Ulysses. "And there was silence in heaven," says John. Nothing but some overwhelming power could have caused silence where eternal hosannas reign. "At the sight of Cyrus, the earth is silent." What a tremendous impression of

power is thus conveyed: and how sublime is the silence of Christ; "and he was silent and answered not."

So much for the sublime: now for a little of the beautiful. From Glen Sanicks onwards, the scenery continues to resemble that which lies between the entrance of this valley and Brodick. In as far as it differs, it is in displaying cliffs of greater rudeness, and larger masses of bare rock, together with a shore occasionally strewed with enormous ruins, which render the walk laborious, though still interesting. A huge detached fragment of sandstone called the Cock, may be said almost to terminate the walk in this direction; but the shore does not cease to be accessible, even round the point, and into Loch Ransa. Birch, ash, and oak, springing up luxuriantly among the cliffs, add variety and ornament, even to the rudest parts of this scenery; and flat sandy coves, washed by a bright green sea, and their borders splendent with the lovely blue flowers of the Pulmonaria maritima, occasionally intervene to diversify the walk among the labyrinths of rocks and over the daisied green enlivened by myriads of rabbits. One scene which occurs at a place called Scriden, peculiarly demands attention, and will not fail to arrest it. A large portion of the mountain above, has here given way, so as to strew the whole of the steep declivity, for more than a mile, with enormous masses of rock; covering also the shore beneath with heaps of fragments, many of which are of the size of the ordinary cottages of the people. The space thus occupied is considerable; and while the appearance is everywhere picturesque, it changes at almost every point in proceeding along the beach. But everywhere it has the effect of a torrent of stones in the very act of motion. This is particularly the case when, standing directly beneath, we look up to the sky; the bulk of the fragments diminish-

ing in perspective as they retire from the eye, while the aerial tint of the summit appears to prolong them to an indefinite distance. In this position, the effect is absolutely fearful. It is difficult to imagine that we do not see them move, and that we do not hear the crashing and rending of the mountain, as they appear tumbling over each other in an enormous stream, from its summit to the very shore, to overwhelm us. The impulse to fly from the thundering ruin is almost irrepressible.

Were it not for the castle in Loch Ransa, that bay would not attract much attention, as its forms are scarcely picturesque. That however is an interesting object, and serves to give it a definite character; though the architecture is not striking, either for detail or general effect. The ruin is very entire; too entire perhaps for beauty; and is not likely to be older than the date which Fordun has assigned, or between thirteen and fourteen hundred. The masonry has been carefully executed, and, as a Highland castle, it must be esteemed ornamental. It is however but a castellated mansion, and of no great strength. The whole bay formed a beautiful sight when I saw it last, on a fine evening in August, when it happened to be the rendezvous of the herring fleet. The busses that were purchasing fish, were at anchor in the loch, each with its flag flying, and surrounded by boats in groups delivering their cargoes, while some were running along side, and others hoisting their sails to stand out again to sea. The dark festoons of the nets hanging over the side, the white topsails above, displayed to dry, and the bright yellow hulls of the herring boats, with all their variety of brown and yellow and white sails, and with the smooth green sea below, reflecting every tint, formed combinations of colouring even more exquisite than those produced by the elegant forms of these

boats, with their tall masts and pyramidal sails, dispersed and contrasted and grouped, in every possible manner. Far away towards the Argyllshire coast, the sea was covered with a swarm of boats of all sizes and kinds, with sails of all shapes and colours, standing away towards Loch Fyne on every possible tack, and gradually diminishing to the sight till they vanished under the distant land. The shore was another scene of life which served to complete the picture. Other boats drawn up on the beach, or ranged along the margin of the water, were delivering cargoes to the country people and to the coopers; the whole green beneath the castle being strewed with fish, and nets, and casks, while horses, and carts, and groups of people in motion, with the hum of their voices, and the hollow sound from the coopering of the casks re-echoing from hill to hill, added to the smokes of numerous fires employed in cookery or in boiling the oil, rendered the whole a scene of confusion, activity and bustle, contrasting strangely with the wild solitude of the mountains around, and the calm repose of the setting sun.

From Loch Ransa, along the east shore of Arran, a similar road leads by the margin of the water, affording variety, in the views of the Argyllshire coast across Kilbranan sound. In many parts, the land is high, the hills sloping rapidly up from the sea, covered with woods; while at the exit of the Jorsa, the Machrie, and the Blackwater, low valleys open far into the land, strewed with scattered farms and gay with cultivation. Though this walk is not deficient in beauty, it is far inferior to that between Brodick and Loch Ransa; presenting features far less bold, and much less variety. At Tormore, there are some low, but spacious and dry, caverns in the sandstone, which the usual wearisome traditions assign

to Fingal; while some casual scratches made on the rock by idle boys, are called sculptures. The marks of recent fires, not improbably made by smuggling distillers, are the places where he cooked his venison; and so forth. It is no great compliment to Fingal and his heroes to suppose them barbarians residing in caves; and his present friends seem to have forgotten this in their ardour, and to have forgotten too, that these gentlemen lived in a magnificent palace at Inverlochy, or in the seven vitrified towers of Selma: two modes of life not very compatible.

Arran, indeed, is supposed to have been one of the great resorts of this hero and his dynasty; and for no better reason, I imagine, than because some recent etymologists have thought fit to derive its name from Ar fin, or some such words; the field of Fingal. In fact, Fingal was never heard of in Arran till lately; and as to the name, it is simply ancient British; signifying a land of mountains. It is a common term in Wales, applied to different well-known hills, and it occurs similarly in Ireland. If the application had been ancient, it would have had some merit, even though the hero himself had been a more romantic personage than "Pendragon's worthy son;" who "by force of arms Albania overran, pursuing of the Pict beyond Mount Caledon;" but, as a recent fiction, it is nothing. To delight in Fingal as the hero of romance, is legitimate. Even should he have lived, let his life and actions be defended where possible; but let his romance be, like the conquests of Arthur throughout Europe, our amusement, not the object of controversy and belief. This is, not only to rob ourselves of our pleasures, but to convert them into pain. As the hero of romance, let him live, and die, and fight, and be born and buried everywhere. And let the Irish, if they choose,

make him of the race of the Anakim, the Rephaiim, and the Nephilim, a Tityus, a Turnus, or an Antæus. He will be no worse for these supererogations than those gentlemen were before him, nor than his great enemy Odin himself was. What though, like the Rabbinical Adam, his stature had been equal to the world's semidiameter, or that, like the gentle Bachelor, he should have regaled on none " autres dragies, que pointes d'espées brisées, et fers de glaive à la moustarde," he will not the less have been Somebody, and we may still delight in the poetry that celebrates him, or pause over his grey stone, (if we can find it), just as we can read of Ulysses and the Cyclops, or of Hercules and Bacchus. But it is the ancient fiction that delights us: at the modern, we recoil; and we recoil still more from the attempts to render matter of history, such things as belong to poetry and romance.

The point of Drumodune is a striking object, from the regularity of its columnar arrangement, though the altitude is inconsiderable; but hence as far as the Bennan Head and Kildonan, there is nothing very amusing in the scenery along the coast. Both of these points are somewhat remarkable, from their abruptness and the nature of their black rocks; and the traveller cannot help being struck, in various places, with the long dykes, or trap veins, which project into the sea like artificial piers, and which might easily serve that purpose were they wanted. In another respect they are interesting; remaining as gages or records of the waste which the surrounding land has undergone. Kildonan castle is a square tower, without beauty or interest, scarcely even forming in the landscape, an object of which the absence would be missed. Hence, round to Lamlash Bay, the shores are high and rocky, but without beauty; nor does the interior land of

this island towards the south, present any features to repay the trouble of crossing it.

Arran, containing the usual obscure remains of antiquity, possesses some specimens remarkable enough to merit a few words, though now on a nearly exhausted subject. The erect stones near Brodick, however conspicuous from their size, are of too common a character to need any particular notice. Near Lamlash Bay, there is a collection of what appear to be ruined cromlechs. As far as my experience goes, this species of monument is rare in Scotland; though sufficiently common in Cornwall, and occurring also in Wales and in Guernsey; as a solitary specimen, called Kit's Coity House, does in Kent. There has been more than enough written on this subject, and they have, as might be expected, been called Druidical altars. Yet they seem to have been merely sepulchral monuments; and in every case, I believe, where they have been examined for the first time, skeletons have been found beneath or near to them. Some barrows in Glen Cloy are plainly sepulchral.

I have long had a suspicion that many of the circles, as well as other stone erections which have been called Druidical, were also funereal and Celtic monuments. I think this is likely to be true of one in Lewis, where four stones, forming a square, are surrounded by a circle; and that it is equally so in Aberdeenshire, where there are, in a similar manner, in many places, four stones inclosing a space: but flat, and set on the edges, so as to form a kind of stone chest, or Kist Vaen, above ground. This opinion is founded on some of the epitaphs, if they may be so called, preserved in Wales to the memory of their ancient heroes, which I have noticed more particularly elsewhere. One of these says; "To whom belongs the square grave with the four stately stones on its corners?

It is the grave of Madoc the fierce knight." And in another: "The tomb of Owain the son of Urien is girded with four stones at Llan Morvael." In the examples in Aberdeenshire, the "four stately stones," of which there are now sometimes three, and, at others, only two remaining, were probably the naked monument: while, where there is an including circle, as in Lewis, that may be referred to the not uncommon usage noticed in a succeeding paragraph, of surrounding the proper grave by an enclosure. Thus, it is equally easy to conceive how, where the circular enclosure has originally surrounded a barrow, that may have become obscured so as now to show the circle only; while we may, with equal probability, suppose that the circle alone was a monument in some cases.

Some of the cairns in Arran seem particularly deserving of notice, as rare varieties of this most common of all monuments. Two, near the south side of the island, are conspicuous for their size, and may be supposed to cover personages of extraordinary note; as, in ancient times, the tumulus raised over the bodies of chiefs was distinguished by its bulk: "et regum cineres extructo monte quiescunt." That conclusion is, however, far from certain; because where many bodies had fallen together in action, a mound of large size superseded the necessity of many small ones. It must be remembered that although the cairn was often a monument, in a general sense, it was, in this application to the covering of dead bodies, rather a work of necessity, than a mere ornament or memorial to the dead. Tacitus says that the Germans did not dig pits, but let the bodies remain on the surface, and then heaped earth over them. This was the τύμβος, or tumulus: the tom and tommen of the Celts;

and our own tomb; which became, however, at different times, a subject of ostentation and ornament. But, with the German tribes, it was not a tumulus nor a cairn, but a burgh; a similar hillock, though under a different name, and the term being derived from birighe, to hide. This is an amusing specimen of etymology by the way; since to hide or birighe, (bury,) a dead body, gives rise to a hillock or burgh, which is first converted into berg, a mountain, then into a hill, on which a fortress, which thus becomes itself the burgh, is built, which fortress becomes a town, the town itself becoming, lastly, a borough; as rotten sometimes, wicked folks say, as the very carcase in which the name originated.

Either the tumulus has been a peculiar favourite of all the Scythian, or northern Asiatic tribes, in modern as well as in ancient times, or else these mounds have been peculiarly well preserved; if we may judge from the enormous numbers that are found scattered over Asiatic Russia: as well in Siberia as in the southern part of its dominions. The dimensions of these are extremely various, according to Tooke, both as to breadth and altitude, and there are also varieties in their construction: some of them being formed of earth, and others of stones, some of earth covered with stones, some covering common pits or graves and others stone vaults, and a few being surrounded with walls of stone. It is remarkable that here, as in our own island, the bodies have sometimes been burnt and sometimes not; as if there was no rule or standing usage on this subject. It is by no means true that burning was previously universal, and was superseded by inhumation after the introduction of Christianity. Even if there were no other reasons for supposing that our Celtic ancestry derived their fashions

as to funerals from this Asiatic source, as there are indeed many more, that inference might have been drawn from these several points of correspondence.

One of the cairns in Arran is surrounded by the remains of a stone enclosure, to which I have just alluded in remarking on the circles; and it is the only very decided instance that has occurred to me of a fashion which is mentioned by Tooke as being rare, even in Asia. It is probable that this also was a mark of dignity; because the tomb of Patroclus seems to have been a cairn thus enclosed. That defence, which originally surrounded the cairn of earth, or the χωμα, became, in the progress of refinement, the ὑπαιθρον, and the περιοικοδομη, by which more artificial monuments were afterwards surrounded. Some antiquaries have thought fit to imagine that many of the cairns were Druidical structures, not monuments, and that this is particularly true of those which have a surrounding enclosure. But the supposition is purely gratuitous: while these facts and analogies, and the finding of remains beneath cairns, of whatever nature, serve to establish their general funereal objects. This is part of that fanciful system which chooses to refer to this priesthood, all ancient and obscure monuments, and many which are merely natural productions.

The cairn of the Highlands served, however, for many other purposes than that of covering, or marking the place of a dead body. The Chiefs were sometimes elected at cairns, as well as near stones. A cairn was the memorial of a battle or a feud, and, of consequence, the sufficient reason for a new one. Lest the agreeable recollection should fade, and, still more, lest the highly esteemed excuse for new quarrels should ever be forgotten, the parties took care to keep them alive, by

adding fresh materials as opportunity served. If a murder had been committed, a cairn was erected to perpetuate the claim for revenge; and the addition of a stone by the connexions of the injured party, was a sort of pledge, to be redeemed as occasion might offer. Should the hostile parties meet at the cairn, it was in itself a sufficient signal for war. If the friendly cairn was augmented from respect, "injecto ter pulvere," the stone thrown on that of the guilty, was a mark of reprobation. "I will add a stone to your cairn," was no friendly wish.

In the last visit I paid to Arran, my vessel seemed enchanted, and would doubtless have passed for being witch-bound, or under the ligature, in the days of Haco or of King James. I began to think, with Mr. Hole, that the history of Sindbad might not be so very untrue. Early in the morning we left Loch Ransa with a clear sky and a tolerable breeze, as I was very desirous of ascending Goatfell from Corry, at an early hour. We were scarcely however fairly in the offing, before there was a fog and a dead calm, so that we could scarcely see beyond the bowsprit. The expedition promised to be at an end; but at length, losing patience, I took to the boat and my pocket compass, determined to row in to the shore. We had not rowed a mile, when, instead of a calm and a fog, there was a bright sky once more, with as much wind as we could carry. But our vessel was invisible; and, on ascending the hill, I could see nothing but a white silvery cloud reposing quietly on the surface of the sea, in the place where I supposed she ought to be, while the whole Clyde around was rough with a brisk wind from the east. Thus matters remained till two o'clock; and as it was time to return, I was much puzzled to know how to find her. There was no resource

however but to sail into this cloud, where again we found what we had left, a dead calm. While searching about in the fog, uncertain where to look for our vessel, on a sudden the whole cleared way, and we found ourselves within a few hundred yards of her, just as she was beginning to fill, having been becalmed and befogged the whole day, in her own cloud, while all the ships around were standing up and down Clyde with a smart breeze. If this is not enchantment, it is at least a very difficult piece of philosophy in the matter of winds, though not more inexplicable than many others that have crossed me in the course of these adventures.

CUMBRAY, AILSA, LOCH FYNE, CAMPBELLTOWN.

In making the tour of Bute, it is easy to land on both the Cumbrays, as they lie at so short a distance. If not within the Highland boundary now, they were once included in it; since, like the Western Islands, they belonged to Norway, and, with the other islands of the Clyde, seem to have been the prime, or at least the most immediate motive, to those contests and negotiations which at length terminated in the secession of that power from the Scottish shores.

The larger island of this name, or the Great Cumbray, is about three miles long, but is very deficient in picturesque beauty, from being absolutely bare of trees. But the views from it are, like all those obtained in this part of the Clyde, various and interesting; and were the island itself planted and ornamented, as it might easily be, there would be few more engaging spots; on account of the disposition of the ground and the beauty of the situation. The village of Millport, and the life and bustle of this little harbour, offer an agreeable variety, after days of solitude spent on the wild or thinly inhabited shores which form the chief part of the circuit of the Clyde. It is said that the Great Cumbray once possessed a church dedicated to St. Columba, but I know not that any traces of it remain. I believe that, to all spectators, even though not pretending to geology, the huge trap vein which crosses the island like a wall, and with a very picturesque effect, will be found the most striking object on the island.

The little Cumbray, though of much inferior dimensions, is a far more interesting spot. It is separated from the larger island by a strait about half a mile broad, and from the Ayrshire coast, by a channel common to both islands. On the west side, it forms a picturesque object; affording some good subjects for the pencil, in its perpendicular cliffs, and in the succession of terraces which rise from the water to the height of about 800 feet: while the interest is much increased by the new light-house which occupies the lowest terrace, and by the tower of the ancient one, perched on the very summit of the hill. Besides the views of Bute and Arran, and of the Clyde scenery in general, which may be obtained here, there is a wild and strange character about the high part of the island itself, which is very pleasing. On the Ayrshire side, there is a distinct flat tract, and of an entirely different character; containing some farms, but more remarkable for a castle, consisting of a square tower, in good preservation, perched on the very border of the sea. The exact correspondence of this with that of Pencross on the opposite side, gives additional effect to both; as they look like the joint guardians, the Sestos and Abydos of the strait.

Both these castles have the reputation of having been royal palaces or residences; but I know not what authority there is for this. Whatever kings of Scotland resided in them, must have been very indifferent to accommodation; as they would now be scarcely more than houses for an ordinary farmer. Their date cannot be very distant; and if it were worth while, I do not suppose that it would be very difficult to trace their real history. It is also said that the castle of Pencross was the place, or port, whence were embarked the bodies of those kings that were to be buried in Iona. The same is said of

Corpach; as I remarked when speaking of Fort William. The whole tale of the interment of kings, that is, of any number of these, in Iona, is more than doubtful, as I have mentioned elsewhere. But it is amusing to see, as I have shown on many other occasions, how, in adopting all these traditions, the greatest incongruities, and even impossibilities, are not only received without enquiry, but defended with acrimony. Duncan, it may be admitted, was buried in Iona; but as he was killed near Elgin, or Inverness, it is extremely improbable that he should have been brought to such a point as this for embarkation. Now, he was, at any rate, the last Scottish king who was buried there; or if, for the sake of peace, we admit that Macbeth also was carried to that island for interment, that will only bring down the date of the last royal funeral at Iona to 1057. But as Macbeth was killed in Aberdeenshire, at Lumphanan, it is not likely that his body either, should have been brought to Pencross. Malcolm the third was buried at Tynemouth; and, after him, all the Scottish kings were carried, either to Dunfermline or Arbroath. Now it is most certain that the castle of Pencross cannot be so old as 1057: so that this hypothesis crumbles at the slightest touch of investigation, even were we to admit that both Duncan and Macbeth had been brought here. But if that was not the case, and if Malcolm the second was buried where he was killed, at Glamis, as is believed, we must remove the date of Pencross, back to 1000, and more; which is perfectly impossible, considering the nature and present aspect of the building. What castle could have existed here before Kenneth the fourth, it would puzzle the supporters of tradition to say; but I need not pursue this subject further. In a similar manner it is said that Grig resided, in 897, in the castle which stands within the

vitrified fort of Dunadeer; a building most certainly of a far lower date.

At the north end of the island, there are some remains of barrows, which are probably connected with the battle of Largs, formerly noticed, if battle it can with propriety be called. The reason for this opinion is, that similar memorials are found about Largs; and that, from the nature of this affair, which consisted rather in a series of shipwrecks and skirmishes than in a general action, Cumbray is very likely to have been used for interment; particularly as the Norwegian fleet anchored close under that shore, during the period of truce for burying the dead. The ancient Scottish historians have somewhat misrepresented, for the honour of the country doubtless, this portion of history, since, as I already hinted in speaking of Loch Long, the elements seem to have been the chief enemies of the Norwegians. I cannot here pretend to enter into the minutiæ of this affair; but it must always appear extraordinary, that so experienced a naval power as Norway should either so ill have timed its matters, or suffered itself to be so entangled in protracted negotiations, as to have exposed itself to those equinoctial gales to which its misfortunes were owing. Haco, with a certain part of his fleet, had been anchored for some time in Fairly roads; the remainder, amounting to sixty ships, having been despatched up Loch Long to harrass the country, as was formerly stated; while a portion of the summer had also been spent in the negotiations just alluded to, relating to the Western Islands. It is evident that he could have had no intention, either of landing or fighting at this place, while separated from so important a part of his forces. But on Monday the first of October, a violent gale arose; and some of the vessels, breaking from their moorings, went ashore near to Largs,

on that and the following day. The Scots, who seem to have been little more, at first, than an irregular skirmishing body collected by Alexander, then Steward, and the Lord of that district, attacked the wrecked vessels; when Haco himself landed with a detachment to relieve them, driving back the Scots; and, on the following day, (Wednesday,) he landed again with a fresh reinforcement. An action then took place with the more regular army which had now been brought up, consisting both of cavalry and infantry, and the former alone being admitted to have amounted to 1500, fully armed. After this, which seems to have produced no decided result, Haco returned to his ships, and a detachment of 800 or 900 men remained on shore; which being again attacked by a force so much superior, part of them were driven to their boats, where many were drowned in embarking. The remainder made a stand, and, having received some fresh reinforcements from their fleet, drove back the Scots, and succeeded in making good their retreat to their ships. Such seems to have been the whole of the affairs at Largs, which never amounted to a pitched battle, and the events of which do not appear to offer grounds for much triumph on the part of Scotland. The ultimate cession of the islands, three years afterwards, was the consequence of a variety of causes in which the misfortunes of this expedition scarcely bore a share; but on that subject I need say nothing here; having already shown that Haco retained, even after this affair, all the territories in dispute. After the skirmish of the fourth, eight days appear to have been spent, under a truce, in burying the dead and burning the stranded ships; and, on the twelfth, Haco sailed for Lamlash Bay; beyond which I need not pursue this fragment of history at present, as what was not already noticed, will come under review

more regularly, in a subsequent sketch of the history of the islands.

The distance from the Cumbrays, from Arran, or from Campbelltown, to Ailsa, is but trifling with a fair wind; but to examine this magnificent rock as it deserves, it is necessary to have a calm; as, without that, it would be either difficult or impossible to land on the north-west quarter, where the chief part of its beauty lies, or even to approach it sufficiently near. On the east side, however, there is a spit of shingle where a boat can always find a landing in moderate weather; and a small vessel may also anchor here if required.

The aspect of Ailsa, from any distance and in every direction, is very grand, and conveys an idea of a mountain of far greater magnitude; since, as its beautiful cone rises suddenly out of the sea, there is no object with which it can be compared. From its solitary and detached position also, it frequently arrests the flight of the clouds, hence deriving a misty hue which more than doubles its altitude to the imagination; while the cap of cloud which so often covers its summit, helps to produce, by concealing its height, the effect, invariable in such cases, of causing it to appear far higher than it really is; adding that appearance of mystery to which mountains owe so much of their consequence. The altitude is however considerable, since it is about 1100 feet, if my barometer told the truth. In every direction, the form is that of a cone, but broader on one quarter than the other, on account of the prolonged or elliptic form of the base. Where narrowest, it is nearly a right angled cone; so that the declivity is forty-five degrees. With this form, and with its cap of clouds, it conveys a lively idea of a volcanic mountain-island; forming, even in this cursory view, an object so very remarkable, that the neglect

which it has almost to this day experienced, would be a cause of wonder, were it not for the reasons I have so lately assigned when speaking of landscape scenery in general.

What Ailsa promises at a distance, it far more than performs on an intimate acquaintance. If it has not the regularity of Staffa, it exceeds that island as much in grandeur and variety as it does in absolute bulk. There is indeed nothing, even in the columnar scenery of Sky or in the Shiant isles, superior as these are to Staffa, which exceeds, if it even equals, that of Ailsa. In point of colouring, these cliffs have an infinite advantage; the sobriety of their pale grey tone, not only harmonizing with the subdued tints of green, and with the colours of the sea and the sky, but setting off to advantage all the intricacies of the columnar structure; while, in all the Western Islands where this kind of scenery occurs, the blackness of the rocks is, not only often inharmonious and harsh, but a frequent source of obscurity and confusion. Those who are only desirous of viewing one example of that romantic and wonderful scenery which forms the chief attraction of the more distant islands, will be pleased to know that, within a day's sail of Greenock, and without trouble, they may see what cannot be eclipsed by Staffa, or Mull, or Sky, if even it can be equalled by any of them.

One principal cause of the powerful effect of Ailsa when near at hand, is that simplicity of form, united to regularity and steepness in the acclivities, which enables the eye to comprehend the whole at one glance; so that little is lost by that foreshortening which so often reduces to nothing the effect of mountains far more lofty. Thus, while, by its magnitude, it fills the eye, it is, at the same time, seen from a point sufficiently near to enable us to

estimate all the beauty and intricacy of its details, whether of form or colour; a circumstance of rare occurrence. Hence Ailsa unites both the beautiful and the grand; not merely because it combines greatness of absolute dimension and an elegant simplicity of form with variety of detail, and that variety under the controul of an almost architectural regularity, but because its arrangements are so happy that the eye can comprehend the whole of these circumstances at once. There is nothing which we are obliged to infer or conjecture, no unattainable point to wish for, whence it might appear to the greatest advantage; but at one view, we are overwhelmed with its magnitude and struck by its sublimity and elegance, while we are entertained with the beauties of its natural and magnificent architecture, with all the variety and playfulness of its details, and with the exquisite harmony, both of its general and its local colouring.

It is only on the Ayrshire side, from the landing place already mentioned, that this mountain can be scaled. An easy ascent of about two hundred perpendicular feet, lands us on a kind of long terrace or shoulder, on which is a square tower or castellated house, still very perfect, as a ruin. The apartments, which are single, are vaulted, and in the lowest there is an oven; there being three stories. I have not been able to discover that any thing is known of the history and origin of this building. Pennant says that there were the ruins of a chapel on Ailsa, but I could not find them: yet it is not impossible that, instead of being a castle or an ordinary dwelling, this might have been an eremitical establishment, and, probably, a cell dependent on Lamlash.

From this building, up to the summit of the hill, the ascent is extremely laborious; not only from its steepness and the roughness of the surface, but from the occurrence of piles of huge fragments, intermixed with

various tall plants, of a growth so luxuriant as to conceal their interstices from the eye. The growth of the nettles is such that they form an absolute forest in one place, nearly six feet high, and so dense, that it is very difficult, and not a little painful, to force a passage through them. All the plants that grow on this rock are, in the same manner, of a gigantic and unusual size. The two chief flowers are the Lychnis dioica and the Silene amœna; and the profusion and intermixture of their crimson and white blossoms, with their extraordinary size, and the solid continuous patches in which they grow, render one stage of the ascent like a brilliant garden. No where in Scotland, not even on the beautifully painted plains of Coll and North Uist, scarcely even on the banks of the Wye, have I seen such a splendour of effect produced by wild flowers as on Ailsa. Two sparkling and powerful springs are found at a considerable height, not far indeed beneath the summit; one of them forming a small marshy plain, which is covered with plants of the Hydrocotyle vulgaris of the most gigantic dimensions, the leaves being as large as tea saucers. I know not whence arises this peculiar luxuriance of the vegetation in this wild place.

The very summit is covered with fine grass, and intermixed with rocks; but it is not easy to wander much over it, without being checked on all sides by those very steep declivities which, to the eye looking from above, seem precipitous, though not generally exceeding 45 degrees, but on which, at any rate, it would be impossible to hold, even on all fours. The goats themselves, who divide this domain with the rabbits, scarcely venture on them; and the whole population is alike wild, whether goats, gannets, or rabbits. These birds build on the cliffs beneath; and, chiefly on their account, this island is rented from Lord Cassilis, for thirty pounds a year, as I was informed.

As to the feathered population, it is not exceeded

even by that of St. Kilda; and, in the breeding season, it not only forms a most lively spectacle, but produces concerts, of a music similar to that which I have hereafter described as occurring in the Flannan isles, and perhaps more brilliant, inasmuch as the orchestra is far more numerous. Gannets, puffins, cormorants, two or three kinds of auks, and three or four sorts of gulls, seem to be the joint tenants of this place; each tribe having its own particular allotment of rock or grass, and the international, as well as private, law of property appearing to be preserved inviolate, in a manner from which their rivals in all but feathers, the "animal implume bipes," might copy with advantage. It is no exaggeration whatever, to say, that the firing of a gun raises clouds of birds which, literally, darken the air; the effect resembling much more nearly a shower of snow, than any thing to which it can be compared. The noise, at the first alarm, is almost deafening; and it is very pleasing to watch the manner in which the several tribes form themselves into distinct clouds; each occupying its own stratum of air, and circulating, without interference, in a perpetually wheeling flight.

It is toward the west side, that the most magnificent scenery of Ailsa is to be sought; the cliffs and declivities to the eastward having very little interest. From the south to the north, on that side, the rock rises perpendicularly from the sea, and, throughout a great part, columnar. As the beach below these is generally narrow, sometimes wanting, and always encumbered with rocks and difficult of access, it is only by means of a boat that this scenery can be examined: an expedient indeed the more necessary, because no adequate idea of the cliffs can be formed, without retiring to some distance and viewing them in many different positions. The

columnar disposition is sometimes obscure; and the cliffs indeed, towards the south, have no pretensions to this character. But as their altitude increases, this structure becomes more decided; and where that is greatest, the appearance of regularity, when viewed from a proper distance, is quite equal to that of Staffa; with such variations as arise, in this case, from the far greater elevation, and the consequent repetition of fresh pillars in succession above each other, as happens in the Shiant isles, instead of the uninterrupted prolongation of any one range. Their greatest peculiarity is derived from the absence of proper joints, and from the fractures which terminate each pillar being very often oblique instead of transverse. If a single pillar be examined near at hand, it will be found far less decided in shape than those of Staffa or Sky; while the whole mass appears as if blended together, not as if each column could be separated. But when viewed in the mass, the general effect of a columnar and regular structure is as perfect as on the north coast of Sky.

In the diameters, these columns far exceed those of Staffa, and even of Sky, ranging from six to nine feet; and they are equally gigantic in their lengths, as they also are in the total bulk of the mass, and in the general effect of the whole. At that point where the columnar cliff attains the greatest uninterrupted altitude, the perpendicular face, as nearly as I could estimate it by a telescopic and micrometric measurement, is nearly 400 feet; and at a distance capable of comprehending the whole, the columnar regularity is here sufficiently perfect. This is a dimension to which even the similar cliffs of Sky and of the Shiant isles must yield; and if Staffa, with its columns ranging from thirty to fifty feet, and its total altitude of about 140, could be transported to the side of Ailsa, tow-

ering as it does, even beyond its columnar cliffs, to the height of more than 1000 feet, it would sink into utter insignificance. But Staffa has been an object of worship since 1772; while Ailsa, at our very doors, was not even known to be columnar, till it was first described by myself, not many years ago.

The most beautiful part of Ailsa, however, lies immediately to the north of this highest cliff, where a succession of intricate parts produces a view, or rather a series of views, as unexampled in variety and sublimity as in absolute magnitude, and throwing into the shade every scene of the same character in the whole of the Western Islands. A cave which occurs near the water's edge, forms the leading mark for this spot; as, in itself, it produces the centre and eye of the principal picture. Its dimensions bear no proportion, however, to the splendour of its effect, as it is only about twelve feet wide and thirty in height. Within, it is uninteresting, and does not penetrate more than about fifty feet. But the darkness of the aperture is of great value in giving tone to the landscape; offering a point of repose to contrast with the surrounding minuteness of ornament, as happens in the case of florid Gothic architecture, where the same effect is produced by windows. This cave lies in a deep recess, between two promontories of a columnar structure; the grassy acclivity of the mountain rising rapidly above them, crowned aloft on the sky by a range of columns continuous with the principal one formerly described. Beyond it, other irregular ranges, of various heights, and undulating into promontories and recesses, so as to catch deep shadows and strong lights, rise immediately from the water; diminishing in an intricate and beautiful perspective, till they vanish round the curvature of the mountain. These are surrounded by a portion of the

grassy slope, variously inclined in elegant sweeping curves, and again followed by a loftier but still irregular range of columnar rock, terminating on the sky, and retiring laterally in a similar varied perspective till it vanishes. To a scene so finely composed that scarcely any thing could be altered with the effect of increasing its variety or grandeur, it is a singularly happy addition that, in more lights than one, it is illuminated in a manner so perfect as to leave nothing to be wished: the extremest breadth and simplicity of general light and shadow, being united, on the side of the light, with a thousand minor shades and demi-tints, and, on that of the shadow, with deeper tones of shade, and with reflected lights of various intensity, which produce an effect no less splendid than it is in harmony with the composition of the parts. The colouring is no less fine and no less harmonious; the mild grey and green tones of the hill aloft, being softened, and generalized with the sky, by the air-tints of the summit, then gradually increasing in force as they approach the eye, but still preserving the same general colour, till, as they reach the sea, the darker hues of grey and the rich brown of the sea weeds that skirt the shore, unite them with the deep green of the water; serving, at the same time, to throw into distance the soberer tints, and thus to augment, incalculably, the apparent magnitude of the whole.

We must pass on to Loch Fyne, the great length and rude boundary of which, excite the very natural expectation of finding much picturesque scenery in the course of its circumnavigation. This, however, is not the case; and though presenting many pleasing, and even picturesque scenes during its far-prolonged extent, there is a great disproportion of blank and uninteresting matter. If the tourist were to commence by neglecting the whole

of the eastern shore together, even from Lamont Point to Inverara, he would lose very little. In general, the shores on this side are smooth and even, without those features so necessary to beauty and variety, which consist in bays and promontories. If there are a few exceptions, they are of so little importance, that it is as little necessary to describe them as it would be for a traveller to waste his time in searching after them. Castle Lauchlan is, perhaps, the point which is almost alone worthy of notice.

It is on the west side that the beauties of Loch Fyne must be sought, and though scattered, they are numerous, even from its entrance to its extremity. But they are, still, little more than fragments of landscape, however pleasing they may often be. There is no one place where this inlet displays any general view, as happens at so many points upon Loch Lomond and elsewhere: as the mountain outline is never characteristic, but, on the contrary, tame or unpleasant, and as the sides do not fold and lock over in that manner which is almost necessary to the production of beauty, in lakes of so extensive a sweep. To call the landscape of Loch Fyne shore scenery, will, perhaps, be to define it in the most correct manner; and, considered as such, this inlet will afford much entertainment all along its west shore, to those who are content to admire, without thinking it necessary that every thing should be a picture or a regular landscape.

It would be as tedious an attempt to indicate those spots which are peculiarly worthy of notice, as it would be difficult to specify them for want of points of reference. But as there is a road all along this side of the loch, the traveller has his choice of proceeding by land or by water. Each will afford some differences; and, in many places, nothing can exceed the beauty of the road, conducted as it is, often among woods and under rocks, or

itself impending over the sea, or entangled on the margin of the water among creeks and promontories. From Skipnish Point as far as East Loch Tarbet, the shore is generally fine; the land above being high, the sea margin frequently rising into cliffs, and there being generally a great profusion of wood. The village and bay of Loch Tarbet form a very singular spot, wild alike and unexpected; and, from it, there is a very short communication, by land, with the western sea. A ruined castle, built by the Argyll family, looks down from the hill above; and, by this little town, the road between Campbelltown and Inveraray passes. Upwards, as far as Loch Gilp, the shore continues interesting, as is the road within the land, for a space of many miles. Loch Gilp Head is a neat village; and though the commerce through the Crinan canal is not considerable, it is sufficient, in many seasons, to render this port a lively scene.

It has been the misfortune of the Crinan canal to have generally had a supply of water insufficient to maintain the waste of its leakage; which is considerable, as a great portion of it is built, not sunk in the earth, and, as it is said, that it has been imperfectly puddled. For many years, therefore, it only admitted of small boats; but it has been lately repaired, so as again, nearly at least, to serve the purposes for which it was originally intended. Its advantages to the fishing boats and the smaller vessels that trade between the west coast and the Clyde, are considerable; not only in saving great contingent delay in the navigation round the Mull of Cantyre, but, to the smaller fishing boats, some danger. It is a wild and not unpleasing walk by the side of this canal; but, except at the two extremities, there is not much beauty. The anchorage of Silvercraigs, near Loch Gilp, is one of the most striking and picturesque spots

in Loch Fyne; from the intricacy of the several creeks and bays, and the lofty and rocky promontories by which they are separated. Hence, indeed, the coast onwards to Inveraray, deserves to be minutely examined; and it is only by a minute examination that its various beauties will be detected. To enumerate them would be impossible; but the greatest changes of character occur near the high hill and promontory where the iron foundry is situated, and again, beyond this, to Inveraray. He who may make this journey by land, can scarcely miss the different scenes which it presents; but if the voyage by water is adopted, it is necessary to keep the boat close in shore the whole way, and to allow an entire day for this portion alone. Inveraray itself has already passed in review.

Returning now to Skipnish Point, its castle must be pointed out, as a ruin of considerable size and in a state of good preservation. Neither the structure nor the situation, however, are peculiarly picturesque; but there is hence a fine view of the Clyde, in which Arran, as usual, forms a leading object. Hence to Campbelltown, is a succession of sea coast, which is almost everywhere various and amusing, and that, whether we take the high road, which follows the margin of the water, or pursue the line of the shore in a boat. The coast itself is intricate with hill and dale, and with bays and promontories and rocks, sometimes woody, at others populous and cultivated, and, in a few places, bare and open, but still always entertaining. Arran, accompanying it for a long way, forms a fine object in the distance, while the ships, for ever standing up or down the Clyde, add life to the whole. But we must pass it over, and suppose ourselves safe at anchor in Campbelltown harbour.

Fertile as is the west coast in harbours, there is not

one that excels this; which, besides being spacious enough to contain a large fleet, is perfectly land locked, easily entered, and has the best possible holding ground. The high and bold rock, Devar, covers it from the sea completely; being attached to the land on the south side by a spit of shingle, which has probably, in later times, rendered that a peninsula which was once an island. The rock produces some beautiful varieties of green, as well as of brown porphyry, easily wrought, to be obtained of any size, and extremely ornamental when polished, but as yet neglected. Sweden, with far less capital and far less industry, (or of reputation for that at least,) than ourselves, contrives to fill all Europe with the elegant produce of an article, similar, yet far inferior in beauty and utterly without variety, whereas this rock produces not less than ten or twelve distinct kinds.

To the south, the harbour of Campbelltown is bounded by the high and bold mountain land which forms the Mull of Cantyre; but, northward, the country is merely hilly. This latter boundary is bare and without beauty; but the southern one is, not only bold and various, but is tolerably wooded, in a country where much wood is not expected. The burying ground of Kilkerran,—named after Saint Kiaran, is a very pleasing, and not an unpicturesque spot; while it is also rendered a very lively scene by the concourse of the fair sex employed in washing; the public laundry being on the banks of the small stream which runs past it, and displaying all the well-known variety which results from blazing fires, huge black kettles, smoke, linen, tubs, bare legs and arms, and merriment. This would be an admirable scene for Wilkie: the landscape adding charms to the fair, and the fair reflecting them back on the landscape. The castle of Kilkerran, which once stood here, is said to

have been built by James the fifth; but it is imagined that there was a castle long before that, which was taken by Haco in his expedition, already mentioned. Some caves along the shore are pointed out, where St. Kiaran is reported to have lived the life of a hermit: and Kilhouslan here also preserves the traces of its ancient burying ground and chapel.

Campbelltown, with Stornaway and Inverlochy, is one of the three boroughs erected by James VI, with the professed view of civilizing the Highlands. It is a place of considerable, but variable, commerce; as that commerce consists in the herring fishery, itself unfortunately too variable. It occupies the end of the bay on both sides, and is a town, not only of a very reputable appearance, but of considerable extent and population. Some extensive piers serve for receiving the smaller class of shipping; and as it is always swarming with fishing boats and vessels of different kinds, it forms one of the gayest and liveliest scenes imaginable. Detached villas and single houses, scattered about the shore and the sides of the hills, not only add much to the ornamental appearance of the bay, but give an air of taste and opulence to the whole. A more picturesque and beautiful situation for a maritime town could not well be found; and, from different points, it presents some fine views; uniting all the confusion of town architecture with the wildness of alpine scenery, the brilliancy of a lake, and the life, and bustle, and variety, incidental to a crowded harbour and pier. There is a very beautiful and perfect stone cross at the market place, which, popular report says, was brought from Iona at the Reformation. The sculptures are as fresh as if but just executed, and consist of various foliages and Runic knots, designed and wrought with great taste, together with some emblematical figures of

demons and angels, to which the same praise cannot be assigned. If I mistake not, for I have not his book, Pennant also mentions it as having belonged to Iona. This however is an error; as is proved by an inscription in black letter, extremely well cut, which says, "Hæc est crux Domini Yvari M. H. Eachyrna quondam rectoris de Kyrecan et Domini Andre nati ejus rectoris de Kilcoman qui hanc crucem fieri faciebant."

It is not difficult to perceive, on examining the land round Campbelltown, that the sea once flowed between the harbour and Machrianish Bay on the west coast, so that the Mull of Cantyre was formerly an island. Much of that tract has lately been drained and cultivated. Through this flat, a canal leads to a coal mine, situated near the bay; the produce of which, though not of a good quality, serves for the consumption of the town. The bay itself is wide, open, sandy, and shallow, producing a great surf in west winds; nor is there any thing picturesque in this quarter, unless it be under the high cliffs. The same may indeed be said of the country in general round Campbelltown; although it is pleasing, and, were it better wooded, would even be beautiful.

SANDA. CEMETERIES AND FUNERALS.

I WISH that when Horace was "about it," he would have taught the gentlemen also, who write travels and tours, how to manage so that they might begin in smoke and end in fire. If he had made a tour in the Highlands, whereas he only went in the trackschuyt to Brundusium, he might perhaps have favoured us with a couplet on that subject: or, what is much more likely, he would have become smoky, himself, occasionally, like the wet peat that Peggy brings in her apron to extinguish the fire. I fear indeed there is no remedy; and that, like the steam engine that whisks us along the Clyde, we must submit to these alternations of fire and smoke; and our fellow travellers also, as best they can. There is a perpetual source of dissension, besides, between the manufacturer of the Odyssey, or between all his race and tribe, and those whom he drags after him, which is equally cureless, equally hopeless. Ulysses eats, and goes without his dinner, and fights, and falls in love, and sleeps, and wakes, and sleeps again; and time creeps on, and by and bye Penelope's looking-glass tells a far other tale than it did. Thus the traveller too wakes, and sleeps, and becomes old on his reader's hands; and if the tale, or the feelings, of the tenth or twentieth chapter, differ from those of the first or fifth, the man and his adventures have had time to change their views of things and their ground; while no one day or month is responsible for its ancestors or its heirs. But during all this time,

his fellow traveller of the closet is sitting in a warm room with his feet on the fender, heedless of the hour or the day, of the storm or the sunshine. Thus he is transported from love to war, or from sea to land, or from a treatise on policy to a lucubration on a mile post, or from the biography of a herring to the history of Ossian. And he wonders that he cannot follow, that he cannot let down the pegs of his mind in a moment from Fingal to fiddling, from gravity to nonsense; while the occasional cloud of smoke too in which he gets entangled, becomes doubly pitchy, from the spark of fire which may chance to have found its way before out of the same chimney. Thus also he expects that the man who has cried great A must cry B, and so on to the end of the alphabet. Unreasonable man; let him too get old over his book; let him sleep and wake again, or tune his own instrument to the concert pitch of the hour; or let him shake his head till he has shaken up to the surface a new stratum of cerebral matter, that so we may not go on, quarrelling and pulling, like ill-coupled pointers, to the end of the chapter. But you and I, Sir Walter, must go on, whether or not.

The breeze that had brought us out of Campbelltown, failed as we got near this island, and the tide being also done, we were glad to take advantage of its little harbour to pass the night. In former days, this anchorage was of far more importance than it is now; Sanda having been a common station for the Scandinavian fleets during the contests so long carried on for the possession of Cantyre and the neighbouring islands. The name Avona and Avon, by which it was known, is a corruption of the Danish Hafn, a haven. In more recent times, it contained a religious establishment, dedicated, like most of those of the Western Isles, to St. Columba; and the remains of the chapel, named after St. Annian, are still

visible, together with two crosses of a rude design, and sundry ancient grave stones, sculptured, as was usual in ancient days, with the different achievements of their long-peaceful tenants. Of the very few superstitions which it was my fortune to meet with in my Highland peregrinations, I found one here; but I know not that those who wanted to persuade me of its truth believed it themselves. Whoever shall step across the prostrate trunk of an old elder tree which lies in this burying ground, will die before the year expires. Seamen, however, are not only pertinacious in recording traditionary superstitions, but are among the most strenuous believers in all that which no one else believes. One of our men was regarded as a great prophet in the affair of boats; since he could predict, from examining the nature of their timber, even before building, whether they were destined to be lost. The ship Argo was however still more clever; since, being built out of the oaks of Dodona, her timbers had, themselves, the gift of prophecy.

The burying ground of Sanda is still used for its original purpose; but, like all those which I have seen in the Highlands, it presents the usual marks of neglect; being unenclosed and covered with weeds and rubbish, and the grave-stones being broken, neglected, and defaced by the tread of cattle. Wherever I have found these repositories throughout the country, with very few exceptions indeed, every thing bespeaks that want of affection and respect which, among civilized nations, is so generally bestowed on the memorials of departed friends. Even the enclosed and private burial places of the more opulent, frequently bear similar marks of neglect; nor is it unusual to see them half dilapidated, their doors broken, and the areas encumbered with rubbish and choked with weeds. I need not inform you, though

it may be new to many of our southern friends, that as the consecration of ground is unknown to the refined purity of the presbyterian hatred of forms, every one may bury where he pleases. Families of note have their own private spots for this purpose. With respect to the people at large, the burying places are occasionally situated in the vicinity of the church: yet not necessarily, and, in the remoter Highlands, rarely: not unfrequently they are the cemeteries of ancient catholic establisments, and very often they are found in the middle of some heath, remote from all buildings, or on some small island in a lake, or near the sea shore, unconsecrated alike by religion or affection.

Scarcely a nation, however barbarous, exists, in which the remains of those whom they loved are not treated by the surviving friends with care and respect, and even with affection; and the usages of many people, both in remote ages and in our own times, have been recorded by travellers with an interest that shows how universally this feeling is spread. It remained for the dark spirit of Calvinism to eradicate what it has offered nothing to replace. This censure, however, does not fall exclusively on the Highlands; and indeed a comparison of their ancient habits with the present, is sufficient to prove the fanatical source in which the present negligent practices have originated. The ancient Highlanders were notedly anxious about their places of sepulture; a feeling which has been attributed to their jealousy respecting their pedigrees and family connexions, of which the burial place was the seal and evidence. "May his ashes be scattered on the water" was the deepest of imprecations. It is probable however that this feeling was equally a relic of the ancient and immemorial practices of their ancestry; whose respect for the dead is still shown by the grey

stone on the heath, and by the cairn which every passing traveller was bound to increase. The sculptured monuments to be found in all the ancient burying grounds, all of them erected during the reign of the Romish church, equally prove that they, then also, possessed the feelings common to all mankind.

Even now, the manner in which they contemplate death, is at utter variance with this species of neglect. They are equally anxious about the place and the manner of their funerals. To be buried far from home, when that can be avoided, is a source of great prospective unhappiness; and while they are attentive to lay up funds for a decent funeral, the first duty of the bride after marriage, is to spin her winding sheet. Thus they contemplate death itself, with magnanimity I must say, not with carelessness: nor is it unusual to speak calmly of the great event, nor even to ask each other respecting their future preparations and places of interment. It has been said that they take leave of their friends as if speedily to meet again; and that it is not even uncommon to send messages to those who have departed long before, or to wish for a decorous death for themselves or their friends. It is not in the nature of a people with such feelings, to neglect or destroy their funereal repositories. But the garment has been rent together with the lace; and we may be allowed to question the value of, at least this result of the purity of fanaticism compared to the corruptions of superstition. The people have learnt to contemn what their church neglects; and that which the latter refuses to consecrate, the former abuse. The whole offers a striking instance of the effects of mere habit; while it proves with what facility even valuable habits may be established or preserved. The very persons who neglect or deface the tombs of their more immediate

friends and ancestors, still pay a solemn respect to the monuments of those who are lost in the darkness of ages; nor does a peasant or labourer ever remove a stone from that cairn or circle of past days which ancient usage has taught him to venerate. Like the Greeks of old, they consider, or did consider, this as a species of sacrilege, to be followed by punishment in the shape of misfortunes; as I already remarked when speaking of the stone in Glen Almond. It is fortunate for the study of antiquities, that these also did not, like the Catholic monuments, fall under the ban of the Knoxes and the Cants. I know not how the fact is; but we should expect that, under such circumstances, the memory of the deceased would be soon forgotten. I believe, however, that this is not the case: though the grave is not merely removed from the sight of the surviving friends, but neglected and despised. Since it is not, as in England, seen on every sabbath day, we should expect that those feelings which its view never fails to revive, must be forgotten; and if the effect of sorrow on the mind is advantageous, we might also conclude that these advantages are here forfeited. If it be held affectation to think thus, let those judge who have lingered about the tombs of their own departed friends, in the lone and tranquil church-yard of an English village. Let those judge who, contemplating these awful remembrances, connected as they are, more especially when in these situations, with all their religious hopes and fears, can leave them and not feel that they leave them better men than they sought them. But, in truth, I am so indignant at this Calvinistical mode of treating a living cow better than a dead man, by turning it in to fatten on the grass that grows over him, that I am not in the "humour of affectation."

You have travelled, if I mistake not, in Wales. If

so, you must well remember Llandaff, and twenty other places; you must have witnessed the affectionate attention with which the graves are preserved and adorned, and you must have seen, with me, that it is not an empty ceremony. We are not now permitted to say "Orate pro anima,"—though even the thought and hope of that is a consolation at the hour of death, which is at least innocent. It is dangerous, I fear, to appear serious on this subject; lest, like Johnson, we should be ranked as followers of the Rex regum et servus servorum: yet none of us need much dread what Samuel Johnson has endured, and what was endured by Butler before him. If it did formerly cost a few pence to a few priests, what then. With us, at present, when the undertaker has performed his function, and his jackal the apothecary has received his hatband and gloves, the man is forgotten. Truly, we may say, with the sun-dial, Pereunt et imputantur. In our Mother Church, he will still be remembered with a tribute of regard after he is gone, and, at his anniversary, a recollection of him shall be renewed. His friends shall not trample on the grave they have just dug for him, while yet the grass refuses to spring on the dusty heap beneath which he lies. This however is ticklish ground. Yet our Welsh friends thus virtually break the law every day; and if their departed relations are not the better for it, who shall dare to say that they themselves are not. Were it no more, it is a beautiful and a touching custom; a custom that poets have sung and felt; and it is to be regretted that it is so fast fading before the progress of refinement. For it was an ancient and a classical custom first. To strew flowers before the funeral, and to adorn the grave with them, was a practice with the Greeks: it descended to the primitive church, and has thus been perpetuated among ourselves. The

fashion was not limited to fair Fidele's grassy tomb. Even among the most barbarous nations, similar, and often very extraordinary, attentions of this nature have been practised. The present usages of the North American tribes are familiar. Those of the Egyptians are still more so. The Tapuii and the Epidonians, as the Greek writers inform us, used to eat the bodies of their friends, out of respect to their remains; thus saving them from an unworthy grave. Thus too they hoped to revive and identify them in their own persons, as the Greeks and Romans drew the last breath from the lips of their friends with the hope of receiving the soul. For similar reasons, it is said that the Massagetæ killed their friends when old; and an analogous usage is reported still to exist in some of the Indian islands. It was not a new feeling, or a temporary impulse only, that made Artemisia swallow the ashes of her husband. But enough of this; and to return to our friends of Wales.

The little fence of osiers that surrounds a Welsh grave, the violet of spring succeeded by the rose of summer, and the evergreen preserved with care from week to week and from year to year, soften the horrors of death, and remove the feeling of disgust with which the cold, naked emblems of mortality are too apt to affect us. While they associate the memory of the dead with the most pleasing objects in nature, they cherish that feeling with which we are all taught to contemplate the grave as the place of calm repose, as the pledge of immortality. Among these Welsh decorations, indeed, a fanciful or a satiric spectator might indulge himself in commenting on the relation of those who lie beneath; on the degree of regard, and on the nature of the recollections they had left behind. Such conclusions he might draw from the care bestowed on the enclosure, from the nature

of the plants which deck the grave. He might here fancy that he traced the lamented tomb of a mistress or a lover, the long expected, perhaps the wished-for goal, of the tenacious sire, the last cradle of the only child, the place of the neglected kinsman, or the dwelling of the shrew, at length doomed to eternal silence. For among them he will find the rose and the violet, the laurel and the hyssop, with rue and dock and nettles and thistles. Should he choose to confirm his theory, he may refer to the emblematical language of the ancient Druids, derived from plants: a language in which they seem to have more than rivalled the similar well-known usage of Turkey.

But, to pass from these fancies, in this Calvinized country, instead of the rose and the laurel, the fenced and decorated mount, the weekly or the annual visit, the ground is encumbered with weeds and rubbish; where there should be neatness and care, there are ruin and neglect, and where remembrance, oblivion. Were even this all, it were something; though a little more learning might have taught the followers of Calvin that these usages were not the peculiar property of the Scarlet Woman that sitteth on seven hills. But the rest is of the same stamp; as if the direct reverse of wrong was necessarily right. To condense this concatenation a little, there is no purgatory; it is a Romish corruption; therefore a funeral must not be attended by religious offices. It is not attended by religious offices, therefore it is apt not to be accompanied by religious feelings; for what are we all but the creatures of association. Witness the ceremonial, if ceremonial it can be called, and we may be almost tempted to ask if we are in a Christian country; to wonder, if it be possible, that with this last act which consigns earth to earth, every thing is

here esteemed to be terminated. Is it extraordinary that the Highlanders should be visited by the ghosts of their friends, when they treat them in this manner. But this is too grave a subject for jesting; without a pun. Is there one who has witnessed our beautiful and pathetic funeral service; is there one who has followed those whom he loved to the tomb, who has listened to the solemn "ashes to ashes, dust to dust," and will he doubt the propriety with which our Church has retained that form which speaks to him, in terms more impressive than many sermons,—as we are, so shalt thou be.

It is impossible to doubt that the negligent conduct and indecorous nature of the funeral service, is the cause of the neglect with which the burying ground and its monuments are treated. If, in the Highlands, the respect now paid to the ancient tombs of the unknown, the forgotten, or the imaginary, is merely a matter of habit, it had its foundation, originally, in religious feelings of some kind, in superstitious ones, if we please. The custom remains when the cause has ceased to be remembered: and thus, the display of that attention to monumental records, and the respect to these memorials of the dead, so general in the Highlands, are truly the result of feelings, originally religious, and the consequence of ancient funereal and religious rites; confirming the preceding opinion. The honours of the almost forgotten tomb, have been derived from the ancient ceremonies performed at the funeral of the hero or friend; ceremonies which, under whatever form, had an allusion to a future existence; indicating the return of the soul to the great immortal principle whence it had emanated, or propitiating the Divinity for its future welfare.

Among the ancient Greeks, by whose usages we can so often illustrate those of the Celtic tribes, it is easy,

as among many other nations, to trace that connexion; confirming this view by direct evidence. At their funerals, more particularly known to us when these were funerals of note, sacrifices were performed, with libations to the Gods, and with such other offerings as the ghosts of the departed might be thought to delight in. These sufficed to preserve from oblivion and neglect, and that to future times, even such barrows or pillars as had no inscription to commemorate the hero's name. Vague notions also were entertained, as in Turkey at this day, that the ghosts of the deceased continued to reside near them, and were thus gratified by future attentions. That this feeling too prevailed among the ancient Gael, is apparent from their poems. Thus, further, in Greece, sacrifices and games continued to be performed through succeeding ages, at the tombs and barrows of remarkable persons; and hence, even settlements or towns became established near them, when such resort became annual, or when, like the tomb of Mecca, they became the object of occasional curiosity or of pilgrimage. From this cause, originated many of the settlements of the Troad, where Achilles, Patroclus, Hector, Ajax, and others, were the objects of veneration; to whom the regard thus paid, naturally passed into ceremonies which at length assumed the appearance of divine honours. Thus, it is probable, did the ancient heroes of Greece become deified: not immediately at their deaths, but by the natural consequences of a practice originally founded on other feelings. How, in the case now alluded to, this practice became established, and was transmitted through ages, need scarcely be said; while it is known that it was not finally extinguished till it was expelled by the appearance of Christianity in the Eastern empire.

It is a remarkable circumstance, and one not less

difficult to explain, while it is also a cause of painful reflection, that the image and character of death, all our ordinary emblems of the invisible event, are marked by circumstances of horror and disgust. Among us, to whom Revelation now holds out the prospect of a joyful immortality, death is represented by the hideous effects which it produces on our bodies, by the nauseous remains of our anatomy; as if the body alone, and not the soul, were the object of our regret and thought; as if the former, and not the latter, were affected by this inevitable change; as if we, who have every motive to rejoice, were alone to sorrow without hope. Christianity should have taught us a far other lesson: and ancient Paganism, doubtful, uncertain, or hopeless, might also have taught us, by its example, that conduct for which we have motives which it never knew. To them, death was not held out as an object of terror, or of disgust or suffering. The inverted torch, the elegant "angel of death" bespoke, and at the same time produced, far other feelings than the hideous skeleton, or the naked skull with its crossed bones; the barbarous invention of Gothic monks. The tombs of the Romans were the ornaments of their streets and highways; and every thing which taste could effect, was done to remove that natural horror which man feels at the prospect of his extinction, to console him at the hour of his departure, and to cheer him with the hope of still living in the recollection of his friends. Far other and better reasons have we to contemplate death with hope and pleasure; to quit with cheerfulness or resignation a transitory state which is to be followed by eternal happiness, and to bequeath to the friends whom we leave behind, that hope and that comfort which ourselves have ceased to feel, but which religion now teaches them to feel for us. Our policy is bad,

as our practice is barbarous. It seems to disclaim that which it professes to believe; that which it does and must feel: and such is the nature and effect of associations, that, to causes so apparently slender, we may trace much of that fear of death which pursues us from the cradle to the grave, which seems to make us belie our hopes or our conviction, and which causes the death of the Christian to produce effects which that of the Pagan alone should have caused, but which the Pagan has, with better taste and sounder judgment, avoided.

As the purpose of this digression is to illustrate the present custom of Wales on this subject, as a branch of the Celtic nation, and as contrasted with the feelings of the Highland branch of the same people, it is necessary to remark that it appears there to be peculiarly a relic of the attention of this people in ancient times to the same practices. In this case, as in many others, this division of the Celts has preserved its ancient usages and records, when those of the Highlanders have vanished and been forgotten. That, however, is easily explained by the barbarous condition of the latter for so many ages; the consequence of foreign conquests and internal dissensions. The usages already mentioned speak for themselves; the records are preserved in poetry, which is referred, in some cases, to Taliesin, and, in others, to Bards of a higher date and of different periods. So ancient are these memorials, as to be assigned, by Welsh antiquaries, to heroes who lived, even in the third century; and the whole are prior to the seventh. As usual, they were originally preserved by oral tradition, and by periodical delivery at the Gorseddau, or conventions of the Bards; but they have long since been committed to writing. Upwards of two hundred of these epitaphs are known; and a few specimens, which, I doubt not, you have seen, have

been published by Jones. Whether or not, I dare not prolong this subject by quoting examples of them. Two, I had occasion to mention very lately, in speaking of the cairns in Arran.

If a funeral is, in the Highlands, too frequently marked by something which looks at least like levity, it is also much too often, even yet, accompanied by riot and drunkenness. In the good old times, the funeral feast was more splendid than the bridal one. The νέκροδειπνον was also a Greek usage; so intimately connected are all these customs. In the Highlands, the splendour and expense of these has been lately much disused; yet the usual hospitality that belongs to the meeting of friends on this occasion, is not unfrequently, even now, converted into an excuse for excess. I have seen a burial where the bearers were so intoxicated as to be unable to put the coffin into the grave; nay, I have known one of the bearers fall into it: and at the funeral of a celebrated northern chief, where I happened to be not very long ago, it was matter of pride and boast that a pipe and a half of whisky had been drank: the whole neighbourhood was intoxicated for many miles round. It reminds us of the well-known will of Maister Andro Kennedy. "In die meæ sepulturæ, I will have nane but my awin gang, Et duos rusticos de rure, Bearing a barrel on a stang, Drinkand and playand capout even, Sicut egomet solebam;" and so on. To kill twenty or thirty oxen, and twice as many sheep, on such an occasion, was not unusual in the olden time; and, as at the funeral pile of a Roman, the ceremony not unfrequently terminated in a combat of gladiators.

It was once the practice here, as in Ireland, to sing a Coronach or lament, enumerating the virtues of the deceased. But even this ceremony has passed away; nor

is even the bagpipe, which seemed for some time to have succeeded to this ulalu, now much used.

Instead of explaining it as I have already done, it might be supposed that it is from the contempt of a dead body that the Highlanders evince a sort of contempt for death *itself*, when they speak of their own end and of their burial place, or even talk to you about your's, as of an event quite in the ordinary course of things. Such that event unquestionably is; although it is not usual to consider it so, nor to class *it* with those common occurrences of life that may be repeated on any day without particular inconvenience.

The burial place of Sanda has led me such a chace, that I have not left room to say much else of the island. Nor indeed is there much to say. It appears to be about three miles in circumference; forming a sheep farm, and, lately, containing a few fallow deer; but it is too little elevated or various to be picturesque. A very singular arched rock on the southern shore, is too fantastical to be pleasing; although its dimensions are considerable, and the whole mass sufficiently striking.

MULL OF CANTYRE, LOCH TARBET, LOCH KILLISPORT, INCH CORMAC, LOCH SWIN, CRINAN, LOCH CRAIGNISH.

It would be a better deed than drink, if the highway of nations, as the President calls it, could be made a little more like the new highways of the Highlands, or like Mr. Mac Adam's roads. I complained of Marshal Wade a little while ago; but I should be very glad to exchange the Mull of Cantyre for the most scientific and military piece of road he ever made. After all, that is the fundamental evil of the sea. No perpendicular, no horizontal, no bottom to stand on: and then that vile tendency which fluids have to seek their level; particularly when that fluid is your soup, and, most particularly, if you happen to be to leeward. Whoever wishes to taste of all this in perfection, may amuse himself with beating round the Mull of Cantyre with the tide in his favour and a reef or two in his mainsail.

This land is a rude hilly tract, without beauty, even on its sea shores; if it were possible that any shore of such a character should not present some interesting parts. But on matters like these, I need only say, that those to whom caves and rocks are as yet novelties, may amuse themselves for a day, in exploring the coast from Campbelltown southwards. To prevent those suspicions which are so apt to haunt the traveller in an unknown country, those fears that he may be passing over unexplored beauties, I may also here say in general, that from the very point of Cantyre, through Knapdale and Lorn,

and as far as Loch Etive, the interior country is, with scarcely an exception, a rude mountain land, without beauty or interest. Whatever of attractions this part of Scotland possesses, will be found on the margin of the sea, and, commonly, at a very short distance from it. Thus, by following the shores in a boat, or the interior roads along the coasts, a traveller will be sure that he has seen every thing worthy of notice; unless, indeed, he were in pursuit of science, a mineralogist or a botanist, to whose excursions there can be no bounds.

The rapidity and turbulence of the tides round the Mull of Cantyre are notorious, and I have felt enough of them. I was amused, on one occasion, with the coolness of some Paddies whom we picked up in a small boat in a thick fog, half way between Scotland and Ireland. They had probably drank too much, and had fallen asleep; having thus forgotten which way the head of the boat lay, or whereabouts they were. We offered them a compass; but they seemed not at all disconcerted; and the chief Paddy only hitched up his breeches, and was quite content, provided we would give him the course once more. If he did find his way into the Clyde, it must have been under the guidance of that pilot who sits up aloft to take care of the life of poor Jack.

From Machrianish Bay to Loch Tarbet, the beauties of the shore will not be discovered from a boat; but there is a very amusing road, conducted, nearly the whole way, on the margin of the water, which affords, in itself, some pleasing scenes, besides the fine maritime views which it presents of the channel of Jura, and of that of Gigha, terminated by the long outline of Jura and Isla, in which the Paps form a predominant and a beautiful feature. In a summer evening, and with a calm sea, a more engaging ride for ten or fifteen miles cannot well be imagined. About

Balloch an ty, and near Killean, where the road winds among some detached rocks, this road is particularly romantic as well as unexpected. An ancient chapel, with coupled circular-headed windows, will here attract the antiquary's notice. But as I cannot afford to detail all these particulars, I shall only notice that there is a vitrified fort here, which I forgot to enumerate in the former list; as there is another, in this district, on Dunskeig hill. One on Dundee Law, also forgotten, makes that list up to thirty-three.

Loch Tarbet is a very long inlet, reaching so near to the much smaller eastern inlet of the same name, that the neck of land which intervenes is not much more than a mile wide. There is a good road of communication; and it is not unusual to carry boats between the two seas in carts, when circumstances in the state of the herring fishery render that convenient. The ground is too high to admit of a canal, except at an expense that would not be justified by the results; and indeed its great objects are superseded by the Crinan communication. From West Loch Tarbet there is a weekly packet to Isla.

There has been a tale so currently told respecting Loch Tarbet, or rather about the Tarbet itself, that it has been, not only generally believed, but reprinted so often as almost to have taken its rank among historical facts. Pennant, first of the tourists, borrowed it from Scottish history (or fable), and the rest, as usual, have followed him. The story is, that Donald Bane, who had taken refuge in the Western Islands after the death of Duncan, ceded these isles to Magnus the Barefoot, on consideration of his receiving the aid of Norway against the family of Malcolm. Magnus, by this contract, was to have all the islands; and the definition of an island, (according to the law of the wolf versus the lamb it would

appar,) being whatever could be circumnavigated, the cunning Norwegian caused his boat to be drawn across the Tarbet, thus including Cantyre within his contract, by a trick worthy of Dido and her counsellors. Now the whole of this must be an egregious fable, as I have noticed hereafter in the History of the Western Islands. Even the Scottish portion of Donald Bane's history is very obscure; but nothing except the greatest ignorance of the state and history of Scotland at that period, could have given admission to this fiction; when the islands actually belonged to Magnus and to Norway, and neither to Scotland nor to Donald Bane. There is a puerility in the story, independently of this, which should have been sufficient to condemn it: a gross fraud practised against him who, if he had the power to grant, must have also possessed that of withholding, and who could not have suffered himself to be thus cheated. It cannot now be discovered at what period the Norwegian chiefs became proprietors or kings on the mainland; whether before Somerlid, or how long: but, assuredly, Cantyre could not have been obtained in any manner from him who had it not to give; who was apparently a banished man as well as a rebel, and who, if ever he did bring forces from the Isles against the family of Malcolm, must have done so as a suitor and a beggar, by influencing those powers, whose equal or superior interest it was to fall on Scotland when in an enfeebled state. This piece of history must in future be ranked with King Athirco, and with the embassy which Ptolemy Philadelphus sent to King Reutha.

The navigation of Loch Tarbet is exceedingly beautiful, without being strictly picturesque. The ground is neither high nor bold; but the shores are varied in form and character, often beautifully wooded, and, in many

places, highly cultivated; while a considerable rural population, and some houses of more show and note, give it that dressed and civilized air which is by no means an usual feature on the shores of the Highlands. It is a great addition to the beauty of this inlet, that, owing to the fall of the tide being exceedingly trifling, it is never subject to that display of mud at low water, which renders the Wye, among many other English rivers, so often an object of deformity rather than of beauty. I know not what Loch Tarbet may be at other times; but when I made its circuit, it was with sun-rise, on one of the loveliest mornings of June. The water was like a mirror, and as the sun reached the dewy birch woods, the air was perfumed by their fragrance, while the warbling of ten thousand thrushes on all sides, with the tinkling sound of the little waves that curled on the shore, and the gentle whispering of the morning air among the trees, rendered it a perfect scene of enchantment.

I must pass over the shore hence to Loch Killisport, lest I should write volumes instead of pages. Of that inlet also, I will only indulge myself in saying, that it is spacious, with bold shores and high land; rich with rocks and wood, and presenting, on its margins, endless examples of all that beautiful scenery in which the whole of this coast abounds; trees growing from the very sea and feathering over the green wave, rocky creeks and recesses ornamented or darkened by wild tangled wood and shrubs and plants, with torrents streaming down from the hills through the steep forests above, farms scattered along the shore, patches of cultivation, and boats, drawn up each in its little harbour, or spreading their white sails to the morning or evening sun, as proceeding to or returning from the night fishery.

There is a minute on awaking, when we are often at

a loss to recollect where we are, particularly in travelling. It is not very easy indeed to forget that we are in a ship, where the causes for reminiscence are not trifling. If your nose does not perform its office, and if your ears deceive you, a blow on the head or a bruise on the elbow, serves to remind you that your curtains are neither of silk nor of dimity, but good solid boards of inch oak. In spite of all which, I awoke in the morning in a jessamine cottage, amid purling streams and breathing zephyrs; the feathered songsters were warbling their matin lays (as poets speak), and the lowing of cattle came over the verdant meadows, putting me in mind of fresh milk. A few seconds were sufficient to convert the jessamines and zephyrs into a complicated essence of bilge water and biscuit, the cottage into a narrow birth, and the purling stream into the ripple of the waves as they ran past the bows and gurgled along the ship's sides. But all the rest was true enough: the thrushes were singing and the cattle were lowing; forming a strange union of rural sounds with the nautical outcry that attends the heaving of the anchor and the getting up of the mainsail. When once that operation has commenced, "non avium cantus somnum reducent;" nor poppy nor mandragora neither.

We stood out of the loch with a gentle breeze, and I embarked in the boat to row in shore, and to examine the scenery more minutely. The same beauties, the same scenes of retirement, the same mixture of rural and maritime scenery, of pastoral and nautical life, continue; and it was with regret that I left the point of Knap to stand out into the strait. But the summer days of the Highland seas are, like those of life, brief and rare; and he who trifles too long on the calm margin of the smooth bay or in the flowery valley, will vainly wish to recall his lost hours when the billows rage around him and the hills are

wrapt in clouds and darkness. Many times I had passed this strait, and, as often, I had in vain cast a longing eye on the Isles of St. Cormac, which, like all other unattainable objects, seemed to rise in value at every successive disappointment. There was no difficulty in reaching them now; and we were delighted by finding a creek among the rocks, resembling an artificial bason or a dock: deep, smooth, easy of access, and capable even of containing our vessel, had it been necessary.

This group of green islands is not inhabited, but being attached to a farm on the adjoining mainland, it serves for a temporary pasturage to cattle. Did summer suns always shine, and were waters always glassy and smooth, St. Cormac's isles might tempt some weary wight to establish himself in a delicious solitude, which the first gales of winter would make him equally alert in leaving, unless indeed he were "aut Deus aut Demon." But religion has once supplied those motives which this world never yet did; and it was not without some surprise that I found the largest island to have been the seat of an ancient establishment of this nature. I have more than once remarked the ignorance that exists in this our country of Scotland, among the people at large, respecting so many of its antiquities. There are few prouder on the general subject of ancient descent and fame; but we often heed what is left us of old record, little more than if we had been Americans; people of yesterday. These ruins are not mentioned in any book that I have discovered, not even in the Statistical Survey; nor did the people with whom we had conversed along the shore, even hint at their existence. It is a chance indeed if they are known to any but the proprietor and his tenant; although, from their integrity, they are sufficiently remarkable to have excited attention, even here. Martin

has been so particular in his enumeration of churches and chapels wherever he examined the country, that these islands must have escaped his notice altogether. It is indeed plain that his acquaintance with the islands of the Argyllshire coast was very slender. Monro, as an ecclesiatic, ought to have been better informed, in what belonged to his profession at least; but he also has passed them without notice; as he has done nearly every thing else for which, from the nature of his office, we should especially have looked to him for information. If he had been Verger instead of Dean, he could not have been much more ignorant of the diocese to which he belonged.

Inch Cormac more, is scarcely a mile in circumference, and of a regular form, smooth, and covered with rich grass, so as to be capable of cultivation, were it not now more profitable and convenient to appropriate it as pasture. It is probable that when it was an ecclesiastical establishment it was so cultivated; for it is remarkable in these islands, as elsewhere, that such establishments have always been fixed in the most desirable spots; no great cause of surprise assuredly, nor of blame either, when the choice of the good and of the bad was open. The building is of small dimensions, and contains, within the same area, a chapel, with an attached cell or dwelling. The masonry is solid and strong, and the walls uninjured. It appears uncertain whether it has been vaulted throughout; but the arch remains still entire above the cell, while the chapel is roofless. I am rather inclined to think that the latter was never vaulted; as there are neither indications nor ruins to justify this supposition. The cell is perfectly bare within, but the chapel contains many traces of the objects which once occupied it. The altar has been removed, but the stone that supported it

remains; and in a recess on the southern side, is a slab covering a stone coffin or sarcophagus, sculptured in a rude and dry manner, with a bas relief of a priest in his cope, but without inscription. Though the piscina has been broken from the wall, it is otherwise uninjured; and it is ornamented with a pattern of foliage, of rather an elegant design, supported by four grotesque figures, ill enough executed and conceived, but similar to those so often found in the works of the ages to which we must attribute this structure. In the wall, there are four empty niches, which were probably the places of as many images; but wherever these were found, it is well known that they were not spared by the zealous iconoclasts of the Reformation; and we must at least be thankful to the Synod of Argyll, the especial reformers of the islands, and not the least active of the holy barbarians of that day, for what they have kindly spared. One peculiarity is yet to be observed here; namely, a considerable cavity wrought within the substance of the wall, and accessible by so narrow an opening, that it has probably been intended for the purpose of concealing the utensils or vestments, rather than as a mere vestiarium; a precaution not unnecessary in the times either of St. Columba or of his successors.

I think however that we may question, we who set up for antiquaries at least, whether the Vikingr were not the better enemies of the two. They, at least, would have been satisfied with the contents of the vestiarium; they might occasionally perhaps cut off the head of an unlucky monk, but they would have left the heads of stone saints on their shoulders, as they would have suffered the crosses and the fonts and the altars to repose in peace. These bold worshippers of Odin and Freya would have concerned themselves little about "the horrid, abomi-

nable, popish superstitions," of organs, and bear-gardens, and painted glass, and prayer books, and brass plates, (unless they had taken these for shields,) and bishops, and minced pies, and decalogue boards, and gingerbread kings, and fonts and fiddles and plum porridge. It was by the sword that they purposed to inherit Valhalla; not by unsainting the apostles, by long graces, by writing religious mottoes on their garters, and texts on their band boxes, and by the destruction of the Angel inn, and Christcross row: and the sword might have bit long and sharp, before it had destroyed our cathedrals and our monuments, or cut from the wall, even the piscina of St. Cormac. The apothecaries might have still sold their Catholicon and their Carduus benedictus and their St. John's wort, for the Vikingr took no physic. Nor, as they read no Greek, would they have mistaken Kyrie eleison and Paralipomenon for the names of saints, and thus have left us in doubt about the music of our ancestors. The very Vikingr who accompanied me, held St. Cormac in more respect than their holy ancestors had done; for they protested against removing a fragment of sculpture which one of the party was very desirous of carrying off as a trophy.

At a small distance from the chapel, there is an enclosure containing a sarcophagus firmly built of stone and lime; but rude, and without any attempt at ornament or sculpture. From its appearance, it is probably of a far later date than the building; and it appears rather to be the burial place of some person much more recent than those who belonged to the establishment. At the west end of it, there is a sculptured cross, in a ruinous state; and although I once imagined that it referred to the sarcophagus, I am now of opinion that the latter is of a much posterior date. There is another cross

at a little distance, on the most elevated part of the island: it is broken in two, and much corroded by time; yet the sculptures are still visible. One side is covered with one of those intricate patterns supposed to be of Runic origin, and the other represents the Crucifixion. Two women are standing by the cross, above which are represented three fleurs de lys; an ornament which might lead us to suspect that it was the work of monks or sculptors derived from some French monastic establishment. There is, however, another solution of this difficulty, as the lilies may be emblematical of the Virgin. To be sure, the fleurs de lys in question is not the lily, but it has answered the purpose so long that it may pass. Those who love enigmas and difficulties, like Jacob Bryant, not to act Œdipus but to puzzle him, may look for the French emblem in India, if they please; and suppose it to represent the triangle, and therefore the Linga and flame, or the triplicity of Siva, or the Lotus and the Sun, or the Metra only, if they would rather: and, as it now stands on our compasses, it is possible that it may have originated in some oriental allusion, as the needle itself is Indian. But the French lys is, still, just such a representation of some species of Iris as a boy or a savage might draw, and a very exact one too. If they have chosen to give the same name to an Iris and to a lily, that is their affair. This is a true antiquarian digression; I was going to say. But no: your real antiquary does not stop till he has run the game a good deal further, and displayed a great deal more of his knowledge; as, in mercy to you, I will. But what, after all, if this French "flower de louse" should only have been a spear-head: stranger things have happened; and less causes have given rise to discussions more ponderous and doubts more enduring.

Of the period or date of these buildings, we can only form conjectures within certain limits, as there is little or nothing in the style of the architecture to serve as a guide. There seems no reason however to refer them to a higher date than the buildings on Iona; whether we judge from the integrity of the masonry, or by the sculptures that remain. Their dedication to St. Cormac, though it should prove somewhat more than the estimation in which his name was held, will only shew, that in times more ancient than the period of this building, this had been a cell dependant on Iona. According to St. Adamnan, he was one of Columba's disciples; a fact which carries his existence to too distant a date for that which the style and preservation of these remains would establish, to permit us to suppose that he had even seen this building. Thus I have exhausted all my antiquarian knowledge; content to wait patiently for the time when some future Gaelic antiquary, uprousing himself with indignation at this intrusion into the manger where he has hitherto been contented to sleep, shall prove by some interminable discussion, luminous in proportion to the want of evidence, that I am in the wrong. It is a delightful and an enviable property of this pursuit, that the most brilliant trains of reasoning are produced in it by obscurity; that the highest satisfaction arises from the impossibility of ever obtaining any satisfaction; and that, in the present orderly and settled state of the world, when all people are nearly agreed on all things, it affords a never-ending source of quarrelling and disputation, besides furnishing the breed of the Ritsons, and others that must be nameless, with that opportunity of calling each other hard names, which has become so rare since the days of the Scaligers.

It has been a favourite speculation with some of the

admirers of past days, that the islands were formerly far more populous than at present. As this is not easily proved by showing that they had a greater quantity of corporeal food, when agriculture was neglected and sheep unknown, and when every man's hand was against his neighbour, it has been demonstrated by the greater proportion of spiritual sustenance provided for them, in the numerous ecclesiastical remains existing in spots now destitute of a place of worship, and even, like St. Cormac's Isle, uninhabited. But fashions change: that which once maintained monks now feeds sheep, and cattle rove where abbots ranged before. Solitude and austerities were important parts of the devotion of the middle ages. The lawless pirate at the point of death, was shrived by him to whose monastery he could give an island in payment or bail for his soul. Votive chapels were erected to St. Columba or the Virgin, when the battle had been adverse, or a storm had threatened to swallow the frail bark. From these causes, and from the influence gradually acquired by the apostolic character in the early ages of Christianity in Scotland, much property fell into the hands of the monastic clergy; and it was employed, as it has always been, in erecting those permanent monuments, which only serve to mark the predominant devotion, not the population of those ages. In after times, roving freebooters, or savage chiefs that feared neither God nor man, wrested much of this property out of their hands; and still later, that which a rapacious Donald or Dougall had spared, remained to grace the no less legitimate creaghs of the militant church of Knox.

It was with regret I left this spot, which was quite an Oasis in the desert of sea and rocks; where, except the tern and the gull, or the casual rencounter of a fishing boat, there is seldom any thing to vary the perpetual re-

currence of similar objects, and of petty adventures, that, however interesting when new or rare, are apt to pall from their incessant repetition. But the tide had swept our vessel far to the northward, and it was necessary to pull hard before we could rejoin her.

Between the point of Knap, and Loch Swin, the coast receives a new character, added to its former beauties; from the numerous small islands that lie at some distance from the shore, and of which Inch Cormac is one; often producing very picturesque effects, and forming very amusing subjects of examination. Loch Swin (Sweyn or Sueno) itself, is a very deep though a narrow inlet, utterly different in character from any thing that I have seen in Scotland, and as picturesque as it is singular. The shores are very deeply and remarkably indented in many parts; while, on both sides, they are covered with fine wood; being thus productive of much beauty, as well as of unexpected variety. For a considerable space upwards, the boundary is hilly, descending to the water with rocky margins, though the characters of the hills are not, thus far, very striking. But towards the upper extremity, the hills become abrupt and rocky; while they are, at the same time, richly wooded, even to the water's edge, and high up along their acclivities. In many parts also, they descend in steep rocky precipices, divided by ravines and enlivened by cascades; the trees springing out of the rocks in a manner as wild and romantic as it is ornamental. The land here is also disposed in narrow and projecting promontories, separated by deep and equally narrow bays, intermingled in a manner that no words can describe, and productive of the most extraordinary scenery. Loch Cateran may convey a faint idea of this spot; nor is it less romantic than many parts of that beautiful lake. It is to the height

and abruptness, no less than to the narrowness of these promontories, that these strange effects are owing; nor do I know any thing to which I can so well compare them, as to books set on their edges; to which is added an intricacy of parts, of rocks and woods and ravines and slopes and creeks and precipices, productive of endless variety and amusement. To be in a boat within these deep recesses, produces an effect unlike to every thing in the whole circle of Scottish scenery: while this part of the loch is, at the same time, of easy access, since it can be visited from Loch Gilp Head as well as from the sea. It is a storehouse of landscapes of the most singular character; whether viewed from the summits of these lofty and wooded promontories, or from their intricate recesses, or from the shadowy sea below, which we can scarcely imagine to be a part of the ocean that has conveyed us hither.

I had reason to lament that I could not make a single drawing of this place, nor even one of Castle Swin, which, at a lower part of the loch, forms a fine ruin, standing on the margin of the water. It unfortunately blew a gale of wind, with showers and squalls, and with so troublesome a sea that it required no common attention to keep our boat afloat. The prospect of drowning is an enemy, to the drawing at least, if not to the enjoyment of such scenery as this. To draw in a boat, indeed, in any sea, is no easy office. And after all, by sea or by land, it is both wonderful and provoking how seldom we have the undisturbed power of doing, what especially requires peace, and freedom from all provocation. It is also no less pleasing than instructive to watch the motions of the commentator, who, after a good dinner, with a good fire and a bottle of wine before him, sits down in his night gown and slippers, to direct Parke or Browne or

Moorcroft or Mackenzie what they ought to have done. How should they have hungered and thirsted and been frozen—lazy dogs! why should they have found difficulties in reaching the top of Cotopaxi or the springs of the Congo, when we can all do it in a minute by unrolling Mr. Arrowsmith's map: and how can there be any difficulty in travelling with a chaise and four on one of Mr. Mac Adam's roads, paved, lighted, and watched, ending with a bed at Salt-hill or a supper at Marlborough. It is a fine thing to sit in our elbow chairs and discuss these points. Who, that has not tried it, even knows the perils that environ the man who would, as in the case before us, make but a drawing of a castle, or of a mountain. Is there ever a day out of heaven that we can sit quietly down and say; now I will draw it. Is there ever a day in which there is not too much sun or too much wind, or else rain, or fog, or mist, or twilight; or are you not blinded, or frozen, or wetted, or is not your paper wetted. Or must you not sit on a sharp stone, or in a boat, or on a shelving and slippery bank, or on a precipice, or a dunghill, or a crumbling wall, or amidst cows or hogs, or near an ant hill or an earwiggery, or before a mad bull; or else stand in a marsh, or in the mire, or in a quickset hedge, or among nettles and thistles, or under a rookery, or with your back to the wall, if you can get one, amid boys and staring people, or with one arm round a tree over a cascade. Or else it is fine weather, and you are besieged and beset with muscæ, tipulæ, tabani, conopes, oestri, hippoboscæ, culices, and all sorts of winged monsters, who get into your nose, your eyes, your mouth, your ears, shutting up every avenue to sense. Notwithstanding all which, you must attend to your vanishing lines and your perpendiculars, and measure your distances, and duly space your windows; and much

more. But if you can find no seat, you may draw from the back of your horse; if he will stand still. If not, he will turn his tail where his head ought to be; while the gnats are teazing him before and the flies are goading him behind, and you are goading him laterally. Then he shakes his tail, lifts up a hind leg, stamps, shifts all his legs, tosses his head, bites here, whisks there; during all which time you are trying to settle the perspective of half a dozen turrets and chimneys. Of course, you dismount in the mud: perhaps you cannot now see over the hedge: you hold his bridle and the book in one hand, and draw with the other: he jerks the book out of your hand, and it falls into a pool of water: you tie him to the branch of a tree and begin again; he shakes the rain-drops from the leaves upon you. You take a new position, and by the time you have settled the leading points, you hear a noise behind you, and find that he has entangled his legs with the reins, or that, in trying to tickle his ear, he has put his foot into the stirrup, or is preparing to run away, or is departed and gone. Thus drawings of great pith and moment are turned awry; and yet you ask, why is that not a better drawing.

In returning from the head of Loch Swin, we were caught in a trap, in a most vexatious manner; either from a fault in the map, or because I was so blinded with the wind that I could not see. However that may be, after boasting how finely we had scudded down before the gale, and after fancying that we had arrived at the mouth of the loch, we found ourselves at the end of our journey and of the water too; just as, in May fair, you get your head into the end of a sack and find that the work is all to be done over again. There was no resource but to row back again for two miles, out of this bay, which is very much of the shape of a thread-paper, and in the

teeth of a gale of wind. And these two miles cost us four hours: such it is to have the wind for your friend or your foe. There is nothing interesting in the island of Dana, nor in the little harbour of the Keils near it, nor, I may add, along the coast as far as Loch Crinan. The scenery here, however, is wild and uncommon, and, at the same time, not unpleasing. There is a chaotic appearance among the hills on the shore, as if they had been misplaced after their formation; and there is a want of union and consistency, at the same time, between them and the flat ground from which they rise, as if Nature had lost sight of her usual rules of composition. Where buildings of a visible magnitude are rare, Duntroon castle becomes an important object in the landscape. Here is the western entrance of the Canal, of which the other extremity is in Loch Gilp; and, for about a mile or more, the scenery about the entrance is wild, and not absolutely without beauty.

But the great attraction in this neighbourhood, belongs, not to Crinan, but to Loch Craignish and to the group of islands which lies off the point of the same name. The total number of these, within and without the loch, exceeds twenty, besides islets and rocks which have no names, and which no one has thought it worth his while to count. Outside of the point of Craignish, which is the western boundary, there are five principal islands, besides satellites. The names remind us somewhat of Dutens' list of presentations to the court of Turin; Kenrick, Melikan, Kelikan, and Carmichael: they are certainly not more euphonous, being Macfadyen, Rusantrue, Resave, Garvrisa, and Baisker. In spite of their names, however, they are beautiful little islands: beautiful from the brilliancy of their verdure, from the intricate and picturesque arrangements of their cliffs and shores, and,

what may well excite surprise, from their ancient and solitary trees, perched about the rocks or high on their summits, or stuck in some fissure of a cliff and hanging down their knotted and bending branches into the very sea. And these trees are oaks, without shelter or protection; braving all the gales of this boisterous country, and having thus braved them for centuries, when, at the present day, not a plant higher than heath can raise its head beyond the surface. This, I must own, is fairly beyond my sylvan philosophy. We can understand how ancient trees may be existing now in inland districts where we cannot succeed in raising woods again; because added to, and dependent on, time, there was then the shelter of successive woods, slowly growing up, one after the other, till they had raised the last nurslings to their full stature. But in these islands, that never could have happened; because some of the rocks or islets on which these trees are flourishing, are so small that they could have borne no forests, while the very trees are growing on the sea margin, exposed to the whole force of the winds, in places where, at no time, could any shelter of any kind have ever existed. I must leave it to more ingenious planters than I am to solve this difficulty. The swarms of terns which breed on all these rocks and islands, render them as noisy and lively a scene as the brilliancy of their verdure makes them attractive. In a fine summer evening, their labyrinths form a little watery paradise which we wander about with delight and are unwilling to leave.

But if the outside of this inlet is thus entertaining, the loch itself is without a parallel in style: nor do I know that it is excelled in beauty along the whole western coast. As, of our fresh water lakes, Loch Cateran may be compared to the upper part of Loch Swin, so if

Loch Craignish has any likeness among these, it must be sought, perhaps, in Loch Lomond. Its islands may remind us of some of the islands in that lake, but they are as far superior in variety and beauty, as Loch Lomond itself is to the meanest of the Scottish lakes. And Loch Craignish is unknown; except to fishermen and farmers: and all of it which they know is, that it contains fish and feeds sheep. It surely must have been seen by thousands; for no vessel can sail north or south, without passing close to it, and there are gentlemen's houses within it and on its islands. But there are different modes of seeing things, (envisager, is a better word,) and those who have seen Loch Craignish before me, have contemplated it in a different manner; that is all. We must not quarrel because one of us looks for landscape where another is thinking of rent; or because where we are admiring the magnificence of the mountain and the romantic depth of the glen, he of more solid pursuits, only calculates how many sheep they will feed. Yet this genus is amusing enough at times. I was once about to go to Wrexham, but doubtful; and meeting with a gentleman traveller at dinner, put the usual questions respecting it; whether fine, and handsome, and so forth, "Depends entirely on the line you are in, Sir." On the line I am in; what does he mean. "Fine town, Sir, in the hardware line; handsome business, Sir, no trouble, pay well, Sir, do the thing handsomely." Thus did the man of scythes and scissars judge of Wrexham, church, and country, and all together. But Mr. Hooke was even better, when he declared that the Isle of Mann was the finest place he ever saw in his life, for—the bacon larded so well. The noted huntsman thus abuses the "stinking violets," which prevent his dogs from smelling the odoriferous fox.

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In the mean time, I suppose that I am not much more enthusiastic in my way, than the German cook was in his; but I was perfectly—thunderstruck, will do for a grand word—when I entered this loch on a beautiful summer evening. The impression is as extraordinary and new as it is unexpected; combining all the grandeur and extent of nature with something of the regularity of art, and that union being apparently one cause of its very surprising effect. A chain of islands occupies the middle of this inlet; extending in a straight line for four or five miles, and, as far as the eye can determine, placed exactly and evenly between the two mountain boundaries. Other islets and rocks, of less note, unite with them, so as to improve and complete the general composition. These islands, and the nearer one most remarkably, are hilly, rocky, and uneven, irregular in the outline, fertile, and wooded; and the same picturesque, bold, and varied characters are found on the margins of the loch. Thus, on entering the inlet, and from different positions, we are struck by the magnificent and ornamented perspective of the two boundaries of the water, stretching away, for a distance of six or seven miles, in straight, though indented and varied, lines, till they meet in the geometrical vanishing point, vanishing also in the air tints of the horizon. Between these is seen the magnificent vista of the islands; the nearest, rich with scattered woods and ancient solitary trees, rising into rocky hills separated by green valleys and farms, and projecting into promontories of the most beautiful forms, between which are seen deep bays, often overshadowed by trees springing from the rocks and spreading their rich foliage over the water. Hence, the perspective of the whole range of the islands is prolonged like that of the boundaries of the loch; till also, the last extremity of the last island

vanishes alike in the aerial and in the geometric perspective. As the general character of all the islands is exactly similar, the effect produced by the incessant repetition of similar objects in a constant state of diminution, is most remarkable; while the beauty of that effect is augmented by the fading of the local colour and the increasing predominance of the air tint, till the last green vanishes in the soft grey and misty colouring of the horizon. Thus the regular diminution of size in the parts, through a similarity that is preserved from the nearest to the most remote, enhances the degradation of the colouring, as this, in return, embellishes the geometric perspective and gives value to that, of which, at the furthest extremity, we can only conjecture.

It is an additional cause of the almost magical and deceptive effect of this scene, that, in consequence of the vanishing of all the lines and objects, they appear to be unterminated. The eye pursues them till they are lost, but it knows not where they cease; and, for aught it can discover, their course may be indefinite. Hence all that grandeur which arises from infinitude and uncertainty, and which renders this landscape as unrivalled as it is magnificent and singular. It is perhaps a mean comparison, to say that the effect resembles that which, in a large room, arises from the successive reflections of an object between two mirrors. Yet it conveys too accurate an idea of the appearance, to be omitted; and if those who have not seen Loch Craignish, can suppose such a perspective of islands and mountains as there is of lustres in the case of the ball room, they will form a more correct notion of it than any words can convey. Every island and every part of each are so similar, that it seems rather as if the first object was repeated by some optical

contrivance till it vanishes, than that there is a succession of different islands.

Independently also of the picturesque beauty arising from this disposition, there is a splendour about these islands, in their brilliant green pastures, in their fine and ancient trees, sometimes solitary, at others disposed in groups, and in their extensive coppices, which, in many places, gives them the air of park scenery controuled by art; but by an art so refined and so judicious as is seldom indeed seen where improvers undertake to modify or mend nature. The wealthy farmer's or gentleman's house, of which a glimpse is occasionally seen, adds much to the strength of this impression, by seeming to be the centre of all the beauty which surrounds it, and which appears as if created solely for its ornament and luxury. It seems probable, on looking at this ground, that the ancient trees yet remaining, are the relics of extensive oak forests which once covered all these islands, and, probably, the margin of the loch also; but that still leaves the difficulty unsolved, as far as it relates to the trees that stand to windward, or to those which occur on the outer islands.

That the impressions of the human body, or of parts of it, exist in rocks, is so common, and, at the same time, so ancient an opinion, that it may be noted as one of the most wide-spread fragments of popular philosophy. The Ceylonese point out the traces of Adam on their highest mountain, and the Scythians, as Herodotus informs us, showed the impression of the foot of Hercules in a rock; whence the well-known proverb. Popery, as usual, has turned this current belief to its own especial purposes, in producing the marks of various parts of the bodies of saints innumerable. The rocks on these shores,

display one example of this kind, far more striking than any thing of the same nature which I have met with, though I have had the good fortune to see the granite couch of St. Paul. This is a long double row of alternating shallow cavities, really not unlike, on a superficial view, to the prints of the human foot: and, from their position, corresponding very well to the steps of a person walking. Similar cavities in rocks are not very uncommon; though their nature yet remains a mystery, even to mineralogists; but so perfect a deception as this, I never before saw. If Donald chooses to imagine that these are the traces of the Father of Heroes, he really is fully as excusable as his Scythian ancestors; and far more so than the Pope and the Conclave of Cardinals.

I have so often been compelled to notice the want of dexterity and knowledge in the ordinary Highland boatmen, that, for the honour and exculpation of Donald, I must try to find an excuse for him, as I have done on so many other occasions. Nine times out of ten, he is, in fact, neither a boatman nor a seaman, but a bear in a boat, a landsman at sea. He is naturally and essentially a farmer, and only a boatman by chance; so that if he drives his boat occasionally as he does his plough, it is no matter of wonder. I have said elsewhere, that there are no better boatmen than the Barra men, whose trade is the sea; and I may say the same of the maritime Argyllmen, to whose dexterity and courage I owe many a deep debt. To conclude universally either way, is to commit the old fault of generalization over again. The reason for this remark will immediately appear: it is a prologue to the next letter instead of an epilogue to the present.

LOCH MELFORT, SHUNA, LUING, TORSA, SEIL, GARVELOCH ISLES.

Of all the narrow passages among the Western Isles, there are not many more striking than that of the Dorish-more, or Great Gate, which lies off the point of Craignish. Deep, rapid, and narrow, between bold rocks, a stranger would shun what a pilot knows to be the safest channel, and choose the wider one to the westward. If there is but room for a vessel to turn, it is something, on this coast, where the streams of tide are so complicated and the rocks so numerous. With a favourable tide, and fine weather, the current hurries a vessel through this Great Gate of the northern isles, smoothly, yet, with frightful rapidity; but on other occasions there is a dangerous and violent breaking sea, requiring great attention. A Highland boat full of people had been lost in it but the day before I passed, and all except one were drowned. This, as usual, was from mismanagement; a half-drunken steersman, and, probably, an unruly crew of landsmen. He who would teach these country boatmen to steer in a sea, would undertake a difficult enough task; and it would not be a much more easy one to teach a landsman to sit still, and not to hold on by the sheet in a squall, as a seaman on horseback holds fast by the bridle. Fortunately for them, their ropes are generally so rotten, that it is no great matter whether the sheet is made fast or not.

The coast from Craignish Point to Loch Melfort

presents many striking scenes, produced by the remains of trap veins, which, like those in Mull, stand up like walls and castles on the shore, projecting far from the cliffs into the sea, and often adorned with plants and ivy, so as to render the resemblance to architectural ruins still more striking. Some of them attain to the height of a hundred feet; and the effect of these is extraordinary, as we rarely, if ever, can see, in art, a mere wall approaching to this elevation. Loch Melfort itself, mountainous in the outline, and skirted with rocks and woods and cultivation, maintains the general character of the Argyllshire coast for beauty; as does the whole of the navigation throughout this group of islands, popularly known by the name of the Slate Isles.

This expedition, however, will not be accomplished in a day. It is a region as utterly unknown beyond its immediate boundaries, as if it had never existed: yet I know of no tract among the Western Islands which, when properly attempted, is more easy of access, and which will better repay the labours of those who make tours of mere curiosity, or who are in pursuit of picturesque beauty. Making Oban the head quarters, far less time than is usually bestowed on the expedition to Staffa, will suffice to conduct visitors through a range and succession of scenes where every point is beautiful or singular; and without the disappointments so frequent, in that case, from unfavourable weather. But it is alike unknown and unsuspected; and for the usual reason, that every one goes where every one has been before, and no where else.

He, however, who intends this tour, must take his pilotage into his own keeping; for he will not find a guide among the boatmen of the country. The difficulty consists in the tides; without a careful study of which, the passage

is impracticable, or from neglect of which, a boat may easily be detained a night, and even then miss its objects. These are intricate enough indeed, almost everywhere among the islands; but they are no where so complicated and puzzling as in this little labyrinthine archipelago; while they are so rapid, that to oppose them is a fruitless attempt. In a general sense, the tides are correctly enough laid down in Mackenzie's charts, as to their directions: but the times, as they relate to the lunations, are not only often incorrectly specified, but are, in themselves, irregular and uncertain. Owing to the nature of the coast, and to the numerous channels which receive the great tide-wave, these tides are subject, not only to the usual agencies that can be calculated, but to many contingent ones which it is impossible to foresee. These casual events produce variations for which no observations can provide, and which often defeat the foresight of the mariner who is the most experienced in these very channels. In my own experience in this place, the irregular variation in time, amounted, on one day, to three hours, and, on another, to four; these being differences between succeeding days, where they ought not to have exceeded forty minutes. Thus, not only the time of ebb or flood will vary three or four hours from what it ought to be, but the quantity, or the rise and fall, will be found equally variable. An expected spring tide may sometimes prove almost a neap one, or the reverse; or even two or three distinct tides will take place where there should have been but one.

The main cause of the intricacy of these tides, as well as of their irregularity, is found in the inequalities, as to dimension and position, of the channels through which the wave flows, in the circumstance of many places receiving their tides through more than one channel, in the

different times at which the ebb or flow commences in the different channels, and, lastly, in their receiving them through more channels at certain periods of the tide than at others. When, to these permanent causes, are added variations in the force of the winds without, and the variable opposition or coincidence of the distinct currents thus produced, together with the various casual combinations which all these may form with different lunar and annual states of the tides, there are causes provided for the explanation of all these irregularities; however difficult it may sometimes be to apply them to particular cases. One case alone has evaded, hitherto, my own explanation and that of every mathematician to whom I have proposed it. It is that of the strait which lies between the small islands Chenzie and Oersa, and the southern point of Isla; where the time of the ebb is ten hours and three quarters, that of the flood being but one and a quarter; while, in the open sea without, the period is divided in the usual manner.

In many instances, even within a mile of each other, there will be found differences between two places, of even three hours in the time of flood or ebb; and an example of this occurs in the very spot under review, between the inner and outer channels of the Slate isles. A voyager who thus trusts to the outer flood, expecting that it will carry him along the inner channel, will find that he has many hours of ebb to wait; and thus also, when he expects to extricate himself by means of the ebb, he will suddenly find himself checked, at the turning of a corner, by a flood that he imagined had long taken its leave of him. There are few places better adapted to try patience, and stimulate to careful observation and calculation; for the difference between a day gained or lost, between success and failure, may often be the affair of a few minutes of inattention or delay.

To attempt to convey some idea of the nature of the tides among these isles, I may remark; that while the tide is flowing between Scarba and Luing, it is ebbing, for some time, out of Loch Melfort and the inner channels, by four openings; two on the two sides of Shuna, towards the south, one westward between Seil and Luing, and one to the north, between the former island and the main. But the latter ceases to ebb, or to flow, alike, after two hours; at which time the flood begins to enter at the southern channels, while it is still ebbing in the western one; so that, at the same moment, there is an ebb, a flood, and still water, all within a short distance of each other; while an additional complication, not to be explained by any words, is going on in the four narrow channels that surround Torsa. In the reverse state of the tide, the whole of this is changed; yet with variations enough to again puzzle the navigator, who is very apt to lose his patience amidst these incessant provocations. If I began by being provoked at the boatmen, who could neither find their way in nor out of this place, I ended in wondering that they did not take the trouble to make themselves masters of the subject. But where a man cares so little about time as to expect that it will wait for him, as is the common case in this country, it is of little moment that he may be obliged to wait half a day for tide. The latter, at least, exerts more than its usual tyranny here.

Among other remarkable circumstances about the tides on this coast, is their great irregularity as to the quantity of the rise and fall. In Loch Killisport, it is only two feet; at Oban, sixteen; and, in Loch Tarbet, it is scarcely perceptible. The latter case remains inexplicable at present; but, in many places, the tides are annulled by a counteraction from distinct quarters; as, in others, they are augmented by a coincidence. It is from their thus arriving through different channels at

different times, added to the slow emptying or filling of large basins through small apertures, as happens, for example, in Loch Aish, that we can account for the great number of subsidiary ebbings and flowings that take place during the period of the principal ebb or flood. Headlands, diverting the course of a stream, or acted on by two currents, produce other modes of confusion; while they are the frequent cause of those races and rousts, those eddies and whirlpools, which, in bad weather, are so dangerous, and often so fatal to small boats. If this subject forms an interesting study or branch of mechanical philosophy, it is not less important to a pilot or a surveyor; since it constitutes half the difficulty of this navigation, and half the knowledge necessary for finding the way among the Western Islands, almost everywhere. If it had not formed a principal portion of my cares, I should probably have suffered a sea change long ago, instead of being now scribbling at my ease. I should certainly have seen far less than I did, and spent twice as much time in seeing even that. Let the tourist who would follow me, carry the moon in his head; but he will, even then, be as much deceived as Hudibras, if he fancies that she reigns over the spring tides with paramount authority. He must study deeper than in Moore's Almanack, if he would understand these rebellious and disobedient ebbings and flowings; and even when he learns to know them, he will find that they are capricious masters, and himself their perpetual slave.

Luing, Seil, and the little island of Eysdill, being formed, in great part, of slate, are the seats of an extensive manufactory, and one of long standing, which supplies a great portion of the demand of Scotland in this article. The most lively scene of this kind is at Eysdill, where, as on the corresponding shore of Seil, there is

a considerable village and a kind of port for the coasting sloops. At Mill Bay in Luing, there is another village; and the whole country, as might be expected, abounds with population, offering a very pleasing spectacle of activity in all parts. The cultivation keeps pace, of course, with this demand for employment; and as the soil is fertile, the whole of these islands display a most engaging sight when contrasted with Jura, or with the hilly and rude pasture lands of Cantyre. The inner channels are rendered very lively by the numerous boats that are constantly passing and repassing; as is the outer sea, by the great concourse of ships steering for Fort William and the Sound of Mull.

Luing is a long hilly ridge, without any picturesque beauty in itself; but it is a station for some of those beautiful views which are found on all the elevated points of these islands. Looking northward, and from many different places, it affords some of the most magnificent and ornamented landscapes that occur about this coast. The brilliancy of these tortuous channels is embellished by the intricacy and variety of the shores; now smooth and green, now rocky and bold, or rising into high cliffs or hills, and covered, even from the water's edge, with fine wood. Beyond, the mountains of Mull and Morven rise, blue, and overtopping the landscape, in various and elegant forms; while the white sails of the boats working their way among the islands, and the view of innumerable houses and villages sending up their smoke along the sides of the hills, give life to the whole. Torsa and Seil afford similar stations for pictures far too numerous to describe; the views to the west comprising the bold forms of Scarba and Jura, and all the confusion of the outer channel, bounded northwards by the long black range of Mull; while those to the east look over to the

coast of Knapdale and Lorn, here richly wooded, and varied with high rocky cliffs and cultivation.

On Luing, there is a very good specimen of one of those round forts of loose stone so often described. This particular one happens to be an oval, of about twenty yards by fifteen. On Torsa, which is a bare and green island, there is a castle of more note, called the Castle of Dogs, said to have been a hunting seat of the Macdonalds. It displays the remains of two square towers united, with a circular flanking defence at one of the angles; being built in such a manner on a rock, that the faces of the scarp form one continued mass with the walls. The length of this island is about a mile and a half, and it is united to Luing at low water by a dry ebb. An artist who may chance to have worn out his pencils, may supply himself here with as much black chalk as he pleases; for it is a perfect quarry of that substance.

Shuna, which is about three miles long, has a very different aspect from the other islands; being rocky, rude, and uneven, and covered with scattered brushwood and low trees, which, at a distance, have all the effect of fine wood, and give it a very ornamental aspect. So peculiar is the disposition of these wooded portions, that the whole island looks like an ornamental park, and it is no praise perhaps to add, like a domain embellished by the rule and compasses of Brown. But Brown never did any thing half so well, and assuredly found his pattern in very different circumstances. Every stream is skirted or marked by a line of wood; and every rocky patch, incapable of the plough, is covered in the same manner, so as to produce what, if it had not been disposed with that freedom which marks the hand of nature, might have passed for a system of belts and clumps. It is altogether a beautiful and romantic spot, no less in itself,

than from its situation; nor do I know any place that would more easily fall, almost of its own accord, into an ornamental domain.

Seil, as it is the most extensive, is by much the most various island. On the north side it presents a rude hilly ridge, terminating in the sea by perpendicular cliffs of bare rock, but the remainder is an undulating and fertile green land, descending gently to the water, and deeply indented on the east side by sinuosities. The shores on this side, in particular, are beautifully varied by cultivation, green meadows, rocks, and trees; while the narrowness of the strait which here separates it from the main land, allows it to partake of all the advantages of the opposite coast, which is high and wooded, varied by cliffs embosomed in fine oak trees, by deep bays and creeks, and by cultivation; displaying, besides, at Ardmaddy, all those marks of ornamental attention, which cause the whole to look as if it was the favoured seat of opulence and taste. It is a common trick of travellers to explain one place by another, ignotum per ignotius; and therefore I may as well share in the privilege, by saying that this narrow strait somewhat resembles the Kyles of Bute; hoping nevertheless that this is not unknown to you. But I must not forget to say that the whole length of this entertaining passage is not less than three miles; being alike diversified, through the whole of this course, by the variety of the coasts on both sides, and by four or five small islands which lie in it, as well as by the flexures which often seem to stop all further passage, by closing the land of the opposed shores. For a space of two miles, the distance between these never exceeds two hundred yards; while, the land on each side being generally high, it assumes the appearance of an alpine river. During the last half mile, they

approach within fifty or sixty yards; and here, a bridge of one high arch is thrown over, uniting the island to the main, and presenting the only instance in Britain of such a junction. In Shetland, there are two islands united in a similar manner. The strait at this part is rocky where the water runs, and only admits the passage of boats for about two hours before and after high water. When full, it would scarcely be suspected to be sea; but, at low water, the weeds betray its nature. It is navigated by the country boats, as it much shortens the passage along shore.

I did not know half the difficulties of this place when I became entangled in it for the first time; and having calculated very perfectly, according to all the rules of astronomy and hydrology, to find the top of high water at six o'clock in the evening, found it very much like dead ebb. Two hours we had to wait, "marking the waxing tide grow wave by wave," watching the long weeds on the bottom, and wondering when they would begin to think of streaming the contrary way. At last they shifted their position and turned to the north, but it required nearly two hours more before our boat would float; when, by dint of impatience, and tracking, and pulling, and pushing, we forced her through the passage. By the time we had completed our exit, we found, as is not unusual in similar cases, that we had gained just as much as he does who hopes to expedite his journey by walking on till he is overtaken by the stage coach. In the mean time the sun had set and the wind had fallen, and a blaze of red, glowing from a crimson sky, rendered all the sea one dazzling sheet of fire. On this, rose the conical mountains of Mull, wrapped in a purple haze; its lofty cliffs throwing their dark shadow on the water, while a thousand rocks and islands seemed to float upon

the calm and fiery expanse. But the sun sank lower, the last crimson tint vanished from the skirt of the highest cloud, and all became grey, and silent, and indistinct. As we rowed on towards the sound of Kerrera, darkness surrounded us; no light but the faint glimmer reflected between the sea and the sky being seen, and that, often extinguished by the shadow of the high lands under which we felt our way, guided chiefly by the sound of the wave as it rippled against the rocks or broke upon the higher headlands. It was long past midnight when we reached our anchorage.

When I arrived on board, my head felt very much like a smoke-jack. I had been at the helm, with not much intermission, for a day and a half, and had been for some time so bewildered that I scarcely knew what I was doing. Of all the modes of attention there are none so fatiguing. So ticklish is the management of one of these delicate boats in a sea, that you dare not suffer your eye to be drawn off its duty for a moment. To blow your nose, or to sneeze, may cost you your life. There is a baffling wind, or it is squally, or you are near the wind, or before it—it is all one—you dare not remove your eye from the sail or your gripe from the helm, lest you should gibe, or broach to, or be taken aback, and overset. Or there is a cross sea, or a current, or a tide, or a long roll on your beam, or a breaking sea behind, or something or other, which renders the sea as bad as the wind to deal with; and neither of them give much time for reflection. That which is to be done must be done quickly; and woe be to you if you have judged wrong, or hesitated in doing right. It is impossible to describe or conceive the innumerable circumstances which render the conduct of a boat in a sea difficult; nor is it wonderful, knowing them, that so many accidents

happen. In the seas of these islands, there are opportunities, every day, of experiencing them all; and I know no place where an apprenticeship to this business could be better served. Tides, squalls, currents, a short sea or a long one, rocks, and shoals, are matters of daily occurrence; and he who has not strong nerves of his own, would require to be provided with those of some other person, before undertaking this expedition. Every man too must be his own pilot, as the people of the country are rarely capable of managing a boat with a sail, in difficulties, and are seldom acquainted with any place out of their immediate neighbourhood. Even my own men were commonly too rash to be trusted; treating the boat, like the generality of seamen, as if it had all the stability of the ship which they inhabited. You read every day of the dangers of the sea; who has not; but there is more real danger comprised in one day's sailing in a boat among these islands, than in a whole East India voyage. It is, in fact, a perpetual hazard; not even an hourly one; since any minute of ignorance or neglect may send you to sup with Polonius; instead of your own expected dinner. I began my career a few years ago, courageously enough; like most landsmen. Every day that I grew older in it, I lost a portion of that courage; but I left it at last before I had time to become an absolute coward. Such are the consequences of improvement in all the arts. The young politician and the young physician, have remedies for all diseases of the body natural and the body politic; and the end of both is to sit down, content with believing them irremediable, and generally afraid to intermeddle.

But these are the resolutions of the night: on the morrow, the ship-wrecked sailor braves again the ocean. After all, there is a pleasure in danger that none can

know who have not experienced it: it is like the delights of war; and after a summer spent in this manner, nothing can be so stale, flat, and unprofitable, as all the rest of the world seems for the first week. It is the perpetual excitement of a sea life which forms its great charm. It is not a small one, that a seaman is eternally employed in protecting or saving his own life. On shore, we have little charge of ourselves. The business of life and death goes on in a sort of mechanical pace which we can neither accelerate nor retard, over which we have no controul. If a scaffold falls on our heads, or the apothecary poisons us with his draughts and his bleedings and his blunders, we must submit to it. We have as little command over the one as the other. But the seaman's life is for ever in his own custody and keeping. When the gale is raging and the sea is let loose in all its fury, when the vessel is on a lee shore, or lying in the trough of the sea, or scudding under her courses, then it is that his own life and the lives of all are in his hands; and his hands are like the heart of man; if they cease to act, he dies. This it is that makes him undergo toils incomprehensible, incredible, beyond the apparent strength and energy of man: to reef or furl his top-sails, or take in his studding-sail yards in the storm and the snow, and in the darkness of a moonless gale; to plunge through the surging sea on the bobstay, or to stand for hours lashed to his helm and drenched in the cold wave.

But it is always a life of excitement, and therefore it is a life of pleasure. Life wants stimulus, and, if we have it not, we must seek it. What indeed is life but action, and what is rest but death. Is it not the intolerable prurience of accumulated excitability, to use medical jargon, which leads great conquerors to escape from ennui, by burning towns and bombarding children out of their

bread and butter. What else is it that makes the gambler risk his fortune and the thief his neck, to procure what they might obtain with much more certainty by a quiet life. What else makes the antiquary undergo, for years, the dust and toil of his trade, to procure an effaced farthing of Darius Codomannus; and what else makes the collector of butterflies and shells and play-bills and Greek metres and turnpike tickets; and Newmarket, and Moulsey hurst. The mind of man requires pepper, and therefore,—and therefore "it builds the pyramids," says Imlak. There is no greater mistake than the system of Quietism: spite of Turks and Quakers. Pluto himself could find no heavier punishment for his greatest enemy. "Sedet, eternumque sedebit." Such was the sentence of the invader of his ancient solitary reign.

But if seamen were not, at least as obstinate, and as inveterately attached to old habits as farmers, a great deal of this danger might be obviated. To see how nine-tenths of our boats are rigged and built, we might suppose that they were intended to be used on mill-ponds, or on dry land; and that the machine in which danger is thus courted, instead of being avoided, might scorn the fury of the elements, instead of being, what it is, among the frailest and most perilous of all human contrivances. That very gig in which my own precious life was hazarded every day, is at least as bad and as dangerous a form of boat as ever was contrived; yet it is the standing pattern for the navy. The Norway skiff, with its high spring, which no weather can sink, which rides on the wave like a feather, is almost unknown, except in Shetland; where, mindful alike and emulous, of the ancient maritime fame of its Scandinavian origin, it is the invariable pattern. Nor is the consequence trifling: since it is as much owing to the adoption of this construction as to their excellent

management, that so very few of this people, always on the sea, and among the boldest of boatmen, are lost. The few losses in the Highlands, compared to their maritime occupation, arises from their excessive caution, or timidity; as they never pass a night at sea, and seek refuge on shore whenever the weather threatens; the Barra men being among the very few who rival Orkney and Shetland in dexterity and courage, as they do in the construction of their boats.

If the masting and rigging of a large vessel is an important object, in a boat it is a perpetual question of life and death. Nothing can be so plain as the general principles, which are both acknowledged and followed in large ships; and nothing can be so utterly contradictory to them as the ordinary methods of rigging boats. It is a common fault, indeed, for vessels to be over-masted; and there is scarcely a seaman who does not know how often this becomes, not only dangerous, but destructive of the proposed purpose of ensuring greater velocity of sailing. As soon as a vessel begins to heel much, her rate begins to diminish; and it proceeds in the same proportion, partly from the increased obliquity of the sails to the wind, and in a great degree also, from the different part of the hull which must be forced through the water. At the same time, her motions become more uneasy, she answers the helm less readily, and the leeway is augmented. In fact, many of the advantages that should arise from the shape of the bottom and of the keel are lost; and all these evil consequences follow from carrying too much sail aloft. It is matter of daily experience, that, under particular circumstances, the sailing of a ship is improved by taking in the upper sails. It is plain that they act by too long a lever in this case; and thus also they endanger the upsetting of a vessel in squally weather.

A boat also suffers in these different ways, from this universal fault of carrying her sails too high; but, in this particular case, the hazard of upsetting is the chief one, as that may happen in any weather; whereas, in large vessels, it is a rare occurrence. The outrigger of the South seas, the invention of those who, in this instance at least, have proved themselves not savages, might be adopted with little difficulty, but is as much forgotten as if it had never existed. Nor could there be any great inconvenience in applying lee-boards to boats; which, while it would diminish that risk, would also enable them to beat to windard, which very few will now do, to any purpose. But the obvious and easy remedy against danger, is a change in the method of rigging. Human ingenuity could scarcely have fallen on a worse contrivance than the lug-sail, which is the most common of all, and which, while it carries far too much canvas aloft, adds the further dangers arising from the great weight of the yard, and from the two accidents of gibing and being taken aback: events that are happening in every one of our sea-ports, almost every day, in bad weather. The sprit-sail is also faulty, from the weight of the sprit; producing the same effect as over-masting would do; and, from the sharpness of the peak of the sail, spreading no useful canvas to atone for its inconvenience. If oblique, or fore-and-aft-sails are desired, a gaff is better than a sprit; and if square sails are to be adopted, the sail should either be cut wider and lower, or increased in a horizontal direction, or else it should resemble a portion of a triangle, with the narrower end uppermost. Sails of this cut also trim better; as, in sea phrase, they can be set more taught. The lateen-sail, notwithstanding its current use in the Mediterranean, is every way faulty. But the best and safest of all sails, is that called the shoulder of mutton;

scarcely known in this country, but exclusively used at Bermuda, where there are two masts to the boats, nearly equal, and with a considerable rake aft. This is a system which is equally safe and convenient. These sails are perfectly manageable in any wind; and while they carry no unnecessary or dangerous weight aloft, they may be increased below, to as great a breadth of cloth as any boat can bear; by using an outrigger, if necessary, to the after one, and adding a fore-sail for a balance. It is an additional advantage, that there is scarcely any hazard, either before the wind or when close hauled, from gibing or backing; while, when it becomes necessary to reef, every reef is rapidly effective. The reefing of a lug-sail leaves half the evil unremoved. The common objection is, that such sails are subject to be becalmed in a sea; and it is chiefly from this cause, added to some notions of nautical elegance and contempt of risk, that seamen, and chiefly men-of-war's men, always rash, are so fond of carrying sail as high on their masts as they can. But the objection is futile; as there is no small boat whose sails would not be equally becalmed in a sea; while, after all, that evil is often an imaginary one. In that kind of sea where this would chiefly happen, a boat would be much better any where else; and would be able to derive equally little advantage from any kind of sail.

When I have been sitting at the helm for hours, for days, among these wild rocks and amid these boisterous seas, anxiously looking for the land, watching the heavy roll of an advancing surge, or the progress of a threatening squall, while my companions, with their backs turned to all these objects, were thoughtlessly pulling at the oar in full and careless confidence, I have sometimes figured to myself the anxious statesman, the adventurous merchant, or the star-

crazed astrologer, bending the keen and watchful eye on futurity, while their lighter hearted and careless companions were occupied only with the present moment, or, if they thought of any thing else, it was only, like my boatmen, of the scenes they had past. Such thoughts crossed my brain, as I prepared for the distant and anxious expedition to the Garveloch Isles, while my jolly friends, unconcerned about the plan or its events, shipped their oars and made ready to pull wherever the helm directed; laying all their cares on my back, like Henry's soldiers, and trusting that if I led them into difficulties, I should also extricate them. But it is all fair, I said: the pleasure is mine; so be the cares.

We had calculated the tide so accurately, that we found it just sufficient to carry us through the strait of the little Coryvrechan, which lies between Lunga and Scarba. The ebb was just beginning to make as we got beyond the narrows; so that we could scarcely credit that a passage so smooth as we then found it, was, at other times of the tide, as impracticable as that of the great Coryvrechan; the sea running through it with incredible violence, and breaking, in all weathers, in such a manner as to sink, in an instant, any boat that should have unfortunately miscalculated the exact time of slack water. Few boats venture on this passage, which is, in fact, not less hazardous than that of the great Coryvrechan; and had mine been manned by natives of the spot, I should not myself have attempted it, even if I could have prevailed on them. But long practice had hardened us to these rash experiments; and indeed the men had learnt to feel a pride in doing what the more timid and less skilful natives dared not try. The scenery of this narrow strait forms a very appropriate accompaniment to the perilous character of the passage: the wild

rocky shores of Scarba, on one hand, rising into cliffs over which its mountainous summit is seen retiring high in air, and the lower cliffs of Lunga, on the other, descending to the sea, skirted with rocks, among which the new ebb tide was beginning to whirl in whitening eddies, as we gained the wider part of the strait. On reaching the open sea, the object of our navigation appeared, a high blue insulated ridge in the distance, backed by the long dark line and towering mountains of Mull; Scarba, which we had left behind, now rearing its tremendous cliffs towards the west, and the long, intricate, and rugged shores of Lunga retiring to the north in distant perspective. Passing by the two inner islands, Garveloch-na-skian and Garveloch-na-more, we approached that singular rock which, white as snow, stands up like the sail of a ship amidst the waves, and at length reached Ilachanu, the southermost of the Garveloch chain.

This chain of islands appears to exceed three miles in length; but, as in many other points of Scottish geography, we are here left to conjectures, as they seem scarcely known except to the proprietor and his tenant; although conspicuous enough to vessels making the southern passage of Mull. But among the numerous islands of this coast, it is not very surprising if many are neglected by strangers; and the natives are not very remarkable for curiosity on subjects in which they are little interested. There are five islands, together with one rock, in the chain; so exactly resembling each other in structure and form, as to convey the idea of their having once been more intimately connected. Ilachanu appeared to be about a mile in length, and is not inhabited: Garveloch contains a single farm, and seemed to be about a mile and a half long: Dunechou, the

northermost, is not more than a quarter of a mile; and two small islands, even more insignificant, lie between Garveloch and Ilachanu. The surface of all these islands slopes upward, although very irregularly, from the south-west; but the opposite side is bounded by perpendicular cliffs, which, through the whole, form one line, however interrupted by the intervals which separate the different islands.

On traversing Ilachanu, I was surprised at the singularity and beauty of a spot which seemed, at a distance, to be a bare hill, and of which, even from the creek where our boat was drawn up, no conjecture could have been formed. Surmounting one ridge after another, a succession of secluded valleys appeared, which, although without other wood than a few scattered bushes, were beautifully disposed, and were rendered interesting, no less by their silence and seclusion, than by the intermixture of rock and green pasture, among which were wandering the cattle of the adjoining farm of Garveloch. It was impossible to imagine that we were here on a narrow spot surrounded by a wild sea, and far remote from the land; no sound of winds or waves, nor sight of water interfering with the tranquillity and retirement of scenes which made us forget that the boisterous ocean was breaking all around.

While I was amusing myself with imagining a hermit here retired from the world and its cares, I came, most unexpectedly, on a heap of ruins, accompanied by characters which left no doubt of their original design. I had no great cause for surprise, perhaps, after my experience at Inch Cormac, to find that no account of this establishment should exist, either in the legendary or antiquarian lore of Scotland, or at its being unnoticed alike by Martin and Monro, and by the Statistical Sur-

vey. It had not even been mentioned to us in the islands which we had left; and appeared, indeed, utterly unknown, except to the tenant, who did not seem to think much of any thing but his farm, and to the very few fishermen who occasionally touched at this place. That a southern traveller should, in these days of universal enquiry, make a discovery, as the phrase is, of a monastic establishment, and that a conspicuous one, unknown to Scotland, among its own isles, was matter of no small triumph to my boatmen, who had long learned to take an interest in pursuits which they had now almost made their own, and who were often of great use in many other things than pulling at the oar. These honest fellows, Macleans and Macdonalds and Galbraiths and Hunters and Hackstons, deserve a record; would this were a better one: but to do all justice, this is a general feature of the Scottish character, not a little indicative of the superior mental qualities, or ambition, of the lower orders in our dear country. This specimen of their intelligence and love of enquiry, might have been matter of surprise to me, had it been the first instance of the kind.

The ruins of that which must have formed the monastery, are sufficiently extensive to show that the establishment must have been considerable; but they are not rendered interesting by any thing in their architecture, nor was it easy to conjecture their original state or appropriation. At a small distance from these ruins, was the burying ground, containing many ornamented stones, with remains of crosses apparently votive, as most of those in Iona probably were. On some of the tombs are carved the usual objects: ships, arms, and the cognizances of Macdonalds, Macleans, and Mackinnons. But all is quiet about their graves; and the turbulent chiefs

now sleep below, in that peace which, when living, they never knew. Macdonald and Maclean, Macleod and Mackinnon, "Worthye Hector and Hercules, Fortys Achill and strong Sampsone, Alexander of grit nobilness, Meek David, and fair Absalome, Hes playit thair pairtis and all are gone." We were also much amused to find here that singular piece of superstitious observance, the Clachan brath, once thought peculiar to Iona; of which no other tradition exists any where than that found among the natives themselves, and to which antiquaries have produced no parallel. Here, as in Iona, those fishermen who occasionally landed, probably felt it their duty to preserve or renew the talismanic stone; as it was not probable that it had descended from the time of Columba to the present day. My boatmen, in turn, contributed their efforts to accelerate its destruction, and, with it, that of "the great globe itself," which is to terminate at the same period.

From the number and nature of the monuments, it is plain that this must have been a place of great sanctity; and, if we may judge from that testimony, next perhaps in importance, among the inner islands, to Iona and Oransa: a circumstance otherwise rendered probable by the extent of the monastic buildings. That it should have been so utterly forgotten, was therefore more matter for wonder. As it bears the name of no particular Saint, among the few persons who knew of its existence, it was probably an establishment dependant on Iona, as the greatest number of those of the Western Islands were.

Garveloch, like Ilachanu, is disposed in a number of small valleys, separated by ridges of rock; but even more picturesque and intricate, as well as of considerably greater variety and extent. Indeed there are none of the Western Islands which can compete with these for beauty in so small a space: which, I ought rather to say, can

compare with them at all. Calypso herself might have exchanged her domains for the Garveloch. If ever I longed to possess an island, it was here. The view from the summit is various, magnificent, and extensive; the height appearing to be about 700 feet. To the north, lay the long range of dark abrupt cliffs which forms the southern shore of Mull, behind which arose its blue mountains in a varied group; the sharp peak of Ben More towering above them, and arresting the flight of some light clouds which the sun now began to gild with its declining rays. To the southward arose Scarba, like a huge mountain, from the sea; the long line of Jura stretching away from it in misty perspective, while, in the distant haze of the horizon, Colonsa was fast fading away. Distant as Garveloch had appeared to us in the morning, its elevation now commanded a view, distinct as it seemed near, of all the glittering channels which intersect and divide the intricate group of rocks and islands of the Argyllshire coast; while the magnificent Bay of Oban was spread out as in a map: the white sails of innumerable boats and vessels, giving life and interest to a scene which was here terminated by the lofty peaks of Cruachan and the prolonged range of the hills of Glenco, stretching far away till they were lost to the eye. The high and abrupt side of these islands is a continued mass of marble, presenting great diversity of character, and containing breccias not less ornamental than many of those of Italy, so much esteemed. But there was no time to indulge in matters of this nature: the last rays of the sun began now to glance on the tops of the green waves, and warned us to depart from a coast on which it was not safe to remain a night in this precarious climate and season. We left it with regret, and, hoisting our sail to the breeze, bore away for the main land.

But evening hastened on faster than our boat; and as

the grey shadows fell round us, the breeze fell with them. There was nothing left for us, but to pull stoutly for the land while it was yet visible; as although I had a pocket compass, it could be of little use without light; and, to be engaged among the intricate tides and rocks of this coast in the darkness of a moonless night, was no pleasing prospect. Every fresh shadow, as it descended on the darkening mountains, deceived us with the hope that we were nearing the shore; but after pulling for four hard hours, it seemed yet to fly from us; while the melancholy silence of the wide and vacant expanse around, interrupted only by the hiss of the water as it rushed past our bows, or by the dreary sound of the cold night wind that was beginning to blow in fits from the land, gave us the prospect of passing the night at sea, weary, cold, and hungry. At length a dark line appeared in the horizon, as if to cheer us, and, after another hour, we recognised the high cliffs of Seil. It was now so dark, that where the shadows of the high cliffs fell on the water, we could no longer distinguish sea from land; and in no long time we struck the ground and found ourselves in a labyrinth, surrounded by rocks and islands, out of which we scarcely knew how to extricate ourselves. As usual, it became the task of the unfortunate helmsman to disengage the boat from this dilemma, and to steer for the anchorage at Kerrera, if that could be found. After much comparison of objects far and near, as little distinguishable as they were visible, I discovered Inish Capel, and thus we at last entered the mouth of this narrow strait; where, from the height of the land on each side, all was black as night. Long we yet had to row, and often we ran aground among the invisible rocks, as if working our blind way through a cavern. At length a glimmering light appeared at a distance, like the feeblest

of stars; but many a time it was lost and recovered again, as some cliff or promontory intervened, till at length the welcome wavering of the lantern as it swung in the breeze, showed that we were approaching the end of our long and laborious day. We ran under the dark stern of a vessel at two in the morning, as, for the second time, she lay in the harbour of the Horse-shoe under the shadow of the high cliffs; and heard the centry's welcome hail, that assured us we had at length reached our own home, after an almost unceasing row of twenty hours; and, terrible to relate, O honest Jack Falstaff, without one penny-worth of bread or one drop of whisky to all these acres of salt water.

This is not holiday work. It is very easy to imagine beautiful islands, and calm seas, and vernal airs, and bright skies, and gallant boats; to fancy the gliding keel and the chearful sound of the feathered oar, or to figure to yourself the white sail spread to the breeze, and the lively bark careering over the green waves. But he who embarks here, on the smooth surface of the summer sea, will often meet the threatened fate of Emma. If youth is at the prow, there is commonly a good deal of trouble at the helm: there is a behind in the scenes, a seamy side, which you will do well to examine before you engage in the same venture. The seas of the Western Isles are not much like the smooth bosom of the silver Thames; but there are other matters too, that must be placed in the equation of pleasure; quantities on the negative side. "Cur quis non prandeat hoc est." But those vile tides, which care for no one, would not even allow me to sleep. In little more than an hour they were come again, and at four in the morning, not half awake, I was again roused by the cry of the watch, "haul up the boat along side; step the mast." It was necessary to embark again, or

not at all: to examine the strait of Kerrera by day-light, and to enter Loch Feochan: or, like the "wise men of London," to "leave it undone." So it was, many a time before and after: and as I did not go to the Western Islands to sleep, so it was. The starboard watch and the larboard watch, had the best of it; to the unfortunate geologist, all watches were alike. Indeed, had he not often watched and waked when others slept, not like the gentlemen at the helm of the State, who do it figuratively, he would often have had but a Flemish account to give of many matters. When the tides chose to wait, the winds did not: and many a day and many a night, day and night both, have I sat on the top of the companion, watching every creek and headland, and many a time have I been obliged to heave to and haul up the boat, and to embark in chase of some object on shore, when I would gladly have been snoring in my little birth. Often was I inclined to say; "who is he, with voice unblest, that calls me from the bed of rest,—let me, let me, sleep again." Only, remember that whenever you undertake the same campaign, you must learn the art of sleeping quickly; and, if that cannot be, why then you must make up for it when you get home, and sleep double tides. At any rate, you will live all the longer for it: for although we cannot add to the number of our days, it is very certain that we can add to the length of them. Quanto menos horas se duerme, tanto mas se vive.

KERRERA, OBAN, DUNOLLY, DUNSTAFFNAGE, LOCH ETIVE.

The narrowness of the strait which separates Kerrera from the mainland, renders this navigation rather pleasing, if not very picturesque; though as the land is, on each side, bold, and often rises into high and perpendicular cliffs, it presents some scenes not deficient in interest. The distance from shore to shore is about half a mile; and Kerrera being about four miles long, this passage is, from its narrowness as well as its length, amusing, particularly if there is any trouble in beating to windward. Loch Feochan is almost without beauty, as the land has no marked features. The narrowness and the character of the entrance give hopes that are soon disappointed.

The breadth of Kerrera is two miles; but, excepting on its shores, it has no features of any kind to attract attention, unless it be the inequality and confusion of the surface, which is extreme. Not only is there nothing like level ground, but the hilly parts are so steep and frequent, the valleys so deep, and the whole so intermixed, that the toil of walking over it is incredible. Its want of beauty is however much recompensed by the noble prospects which it affords of the Bay of Oban, and of that magnificent range of mountains which encloses the Linnhe Loch, with all the islands that are scattered about this variegated sea. But, in the general features, these so nearly resemble the views from Lismore, that I need not notice them here.

The southern shore of this island, however, affords one very wild and picturesque scene, of which Gylen Castle forms the chief object. "On the margin of a high cliff impending over the sea, is perched this tall grey tower; the whole bay, rude with rocks and cliffs, presenting no traces of land or of verdure; appearing as if it had, for uncounted ages, braved the fury of the waves that break in foam over the whole breadth of the inlet and far out to sea. A scene more savage and desolate, and more in character with the deserted and melancholy air of this solitary dwelling that seems to shun all the haunts of man, is not easily conceived. This castle must have belonged to the Macdougalls; as it is of a date at least equal to Dunolly, and to the times when this family were Lords of Lorn.

It was in Kerrera that Alexander the second died, when preparing to invade the Western Islands, then under the supreme dominion of Norway and of Haco. The tale has something of the superstition of the times; when there was a solution for every dream, and when not an owl could scream or a rat scratch behind the arras, but it was a warning from the land of shadows. As His Majesty lay in his bed, there appeared to him three men; one of them dressed in royal garments, with a red face, squinting eyes, and a terrible aspect, the second being very young and beautiful, with a costly dress, and the third of a larger stature than either, and of a still fiercer countenance than the first. The last personage demanded of him whether he meant to subdue the islands, and on receiving his assent, advised him to return home; which warning he having neglected, died. The three persons were supposed to be St. Olave, St. Magnus, and St. Columba; although what interest the latter could have in taking part with the two Norwegian saints, does

not appear; as the piratical invaders of that country had been early and bitter enemies to his monastery. Alexander was buried at Melrose: a proof that Iona had not, then at any rate, that reputation as the burial place of kings which it has been said to have possessed in the earlier ages of the Scottish monarchy; as its proximity to Kerrera must have rendered it peculiarly convenient. Alexander had attempted to facilitate his operations against Norway, by seducing from their allegiance some of those chiefs, often called Lords and Kings of the Isles, (terms which have produced much confusion in the insular history,) who held lands and governments, not only under that crown, but generally, as it would appear, under the Kings of Mann also, as their immediate lieutenants or viceroys. Here, John, the son of Duncan, met the King, but refused to deliver up, as he was required, Cairnburgh and other places, as I noticed on a former occasion: the proposal, on Alexander's part, seeming to have been, that he should hold, either these, or some equivalent, under the Scottish Crown. What the ultimate result of these negotiations was, is related in the History of the Isles.

There is a short ferry from this island, though an indirect one, to Oban; constituting a part of the greater ferry to Mull, and therefore well known to all tourists. As to Oban itself, it is nearly as familiar now as London; and it cannot fail to be very far advanced in civilization, when I found a Highland tinman making kaleidoscopes, at a time when they had scarcely been a month before the public. This little town is neat; and if it has not thriven much since its first erection, it has at least done all that reasonable men could have expected. It adds much to the life and interest of this country, as do the shipping and boats of various kinds which are so

often at anchor in its bay. There can, of course, be little employment for the people but in fishing. Yet, as the rallying point of a considerable, if a scattered, tract of improved country, and of much farming on a larger scale than is usual in the Highlands, it also finds some employment, in the ordinary petty trades of country villages, and in shop-keeping.

The surrounding country is rocky and rude, without beauty; but the soil, of trap, is fertile, wherever there is one. English travellers, who are supposed to be on the search for wonders, are shown a cave containing bones, which is as little an object of curiosity as any thing can well be. Tradition says of it, that, a hundred and fifty years ago, a native who had formed some resentment against the town, (which, by the way, was not then in existence,) went to Ireland, and brought back with him a party to destroy it. On this, the inhabitants collected, seized the vessel, and shut up the people in this cave, where they died of the plague which they had brought with them. Such are the tales which some fabling guide invents, because he thinks it necessary to say something in the way of his trade; and such tales, a little rusted by age, become dignified with the name of tradition: it is fortunate when they do not become matters of history too, like the vision of the three saints.

The most interesting object near Oban, is the castle of Dunolly, properly, Dun Olave, named from an early descendant of Somerlid; the chief residence of the Macdougalls, Lords of Lorn, and still appertaining to a family which, owing to a succession of calamities, fell from the high elevation on which, as the direct descendant of Somerlid, it had been placed together with the Lord of the Isles. Such part of the history of this family as is necessary, will be found elsewhere; and I

need only now remark, that after the losses, defeats, and forfeitures, which it experienced in consequence of the Bruce and Baliol contests, this castle still remained to it. In 1715, however, this estate was forfeited, but was afterwards restored: this chief having remained quiet during the troubles of 1745, and thus regaining his property while many of his fraternity lost theirs. Dunolly Castle is rendered picturesque, more by the form and elevation of the knoll on which it stands, than by any thing in its own architecture, which is rude without magnificence of style or dimension. As an ancient dwelling, the extent has not been inconsiderable. A rivulet and some trees on the land side, confer on it a degree of beauty that would, even now, make it a desirable residence; and the views from it, like those from Kerrera and Lismore, are extremely beautiful. Being constituted by the same features, though somewhat differently arranged, they require no particular notice.

The rocks in this vicinity are chiefly of trap; presenting endless varieties, and, among the rest, one which seems always to have peculiar charms for ordinary spectators, namely, pudding stone. This same rock is also found on the opposite side of the water, in Appin; where it is equally a subject of much wonder. Unfortunately, I cannot explain why, unless it is from some latent and hankering regard which an Englishman feels towards plum-pudding: such are the misfortunes of ignorance. If I ever did wonder at it like my neighbours, I have found so many more wonderful things to wonder at since, that I have forgotten my first astonishment.

Dunstaffnage bears a most attractive name, even to those who know no more of Scottish history and antiquities than what they have learnt from the Verger of Westminster Abbey. Every tour book records the echo of

Dunstaffnage Chapel; the Queen of Parley is no where much more famed: and those who go from the east, the west, the north, and the south, to the Highlands, because other people have gone before them, or for any other reason why, all flock hither to ask silly questions from a bare wall which they might find much nearer home. The nymph who lives unseen, appears an object of unquenchable attraction to the class that delights in caves and waterfalls. It requires little metaphysics to explain this, but I have no time now for a metaphysical dissertation. At the moment I entered the building, I put my foot on the name of W. Bain. Why does the grave of an enemy convey a feeling of pain, often greater than that of a friend: but every one can answer that. Poor Bain; I had long forgotten the injury and the anger too: but the cold stone which covered the ponderous carcase by which I had suffered, and which, doubtless, you well remember, struck a reprimand for having indulged the latter, though but for one short day. A truce with sentiment; and in the chapel there is little to interest an antiquary. It is a modern building: of the year 1740; but is in a Gothic style, having lancet windows within, separated by pillars.

Those who only see Dunstaffnage Castle by approaching it from the land, will find nothing picturesque or interesting in its appearance: it is a heavy square mass, on a bare and ugly shore. But it is far otherwise from sea; making us even wonder how the same object should appear under such differences, from so trifling a change in the points of view. But the effect is produced chiefly by the rock, on which it stands on that side, so as, in a certain sense, to overhang the water. On the land side, its aspect is mean; and as a defence, it appears feeble; but, towards the sea, it carries with it that air of rude strength and romance which leads us back to the ages of Highland

and feudal independence. The date of the present building does not appear to have been ascertained, but it is not distant. The Dunstaffnage of ancient Scottish kings, lives now only in the histories and romances which record these personages. It is probably little older than the period at which it received its battlements from Alexander Mac Dougall Lord of Argyll, which was in 1307: and indeed there is much work about it which should bespeak even a later date. It is a square, with internal sides of 88 or 90 feet, having three round towers at as many angles, one of which projects far beyond the curtains. There is an external staircase, and within the court, a house, now inhabited by a small farmer. Two brass guns remain from former times: but not from those of King Ewen. Though private property, it retains, like many other Scottish castles, the honours of Royalty; the Duke of Argyll being hereditary keeper. Of its real history, there is little known but that it was inhabited by the Lords of Argyll down to 1455, that it was besieged, taken, and garrisoned by Bruce after the defeat of John Lord of Lorn in the pass of Loch Awe, and that James Earl of Douglas here joined Donald Lord of the Isles, and induced him to take arms against James the second.

The fictitious history is much more amusing. In the first place it was built by Ewen the first, who was contemporary with Julius Cæsar; henceforward, and long after, being the palace of the Kings of Scotland; that is, when Scotland, as Scotland, had neither king nor palace. Those who take fire at the very suggestion of a doubt respecting this ancient kingdom, are equally angry at the infidels who do not believe that a work of the twelfth and thirteenth century was not in existence before the first. But when Berigonium was a capital

city furnished with water pipes, when Inverlochy drove a great trade with Spain, and when the Highlands had an university, Dunstaffnage *might* have been the palace of King Ewen and his followers. It is indeed sacrilege to doubt; since twenty or thirty kings were buried here; all those indeed of the earlier breed who could be found after they were dead, and who were not buried in Iona. To confound all the unbelievers, I must give a few of their names; and, after Ewen the first, there are the following. Gillus, who is the thirteenth King of Scotland, then Ewen the second, Ederus, Ewen the third, Metellanus, Caractacus, Corbred the first, Corbred the second, Lythacus, Mogallus, Conrus, Ethodius the first, Satrael, Donald the first, Ethodius the second, Findocus, Donald the second, Crathelinthus, Anguseanus, who is the thirty-eighth in succession, and Fethelmachus. If these are not convincing proofs, where can we seek them, or what are we to believe.

But Dunstaffnage has other evidence of its regal antiquity and claims, in the fatal stone, the history of of which is, at the same time, involved in a very agreeable obscurity. Among these tales, we need not much care where we choose; but it will be as well to see first what Monipennie says; because we have, in him, the true and uncontrovertible history of the origin and foundation of the Scottish people and the Scottish monarchy.

Fergus, the first king of the Scots, son to Ferquhard king of Ireland, was crowned in the fatal "marble" chair, which he brought with him to establish his reign in Scotland, according to the oracles of the Gods. The date of this event is 330 A. C.: but, after all, it is better to begin at the beginning. If we do not believe ourselves, it is worth our while to know what our ancestors *did*; and my author, Monipennie, wrote in 1612. Who was the original inventor of this history, is of little moment; but it is

characteristic enough of the ages that produced Valentine and Orson and the rest of that tribe.

"Gathelus, the son of Cecrops king of Athens," made many invasions into Macedonia and Achaia; and, unable "to suffer correction," (being beaten doubtless,) entered, with his Greeks into the service of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and assisted him in his wars on the Œthiopians, who were accordingly vanquished; their principal "citie called "Meroe," being taken. "Being a lustie person, strong of bodie, and of a great spirit," he obtained favour in the eyes of Pharaoh and of his daughter Scota, obtaining the lady in marriage. This Pharaoh died, and was succeeded by him who oppressed the Israelites: so much for the chronology of these events. In a conference with Moses, whom however he does not appear to have implicitly trusted, since he also consulted the Egyptian oracles, Gathelus was informed of the impending plagues, and, desirous to get out of the way, embarked with his valiant Greeks, with many Egyptians, and his wife Scota, "from the river Nilus, in the year of the world 2453." "After long sayling and travell, he arrived at the land of Numidia," and at length, passing the straits, landed in a "part of Spaine called Lusitania," which henceforward assumed the name of Port Gathel, by corruption Portingale. The etymology is worthy of the rest of the story.

In this Porthingall or Portingale, he was obliged to beat the inhabitants, after which he, somewhat awkwardly for the geography of Spain, built "Barsolona." After that, he built Compostella, where he "reigned with princely dignitie, and instituted lawes, and named his people Scottes," after his wife, who had "borne him two sonnes, twinnes, Hiber and Himecus." "He brought with him from Egypt, the fatall marble chayre, which was transported to Ireland and to Albion."

This event happened in the following manner. "Sit-

ting in his marble chayre," he began one day to consider that his population was getting on in the geometrical ratio, and being informed that there was an "isle opposite to Spaine, in the north, which a rude people inhabited, having neither lawes nor manners," he fitted out an expedition, of which Hiber was made admiral. On the fifth day, he landed in Ireland, which thus became called Hibernia; where, by a due mixture of force and policy, he acquired the dominion of the country. After this he returned to Spain, performing there sundry warlike feats, in which we are not concerned, and leaving his brother Himecus king of Ireland. But, in no long time, the invaders and the invaded began to quarrel; and after much change of fortune, the Scots were compelled to send to Metellius, the king of their nation in Spain, for support and assistance. Accordingly, this king sent his three sons, Hermoneus, Ptolomeus, and Hibert, with an army, to Ireland, where they succeeded in bringing the inhabitants again under subjection. Hermoneus, returning to Spain, left his two brothers in charge of the country, where they instituted laws, together with the Egyptian worship, causing the country to flourish in all manner "of felicitie, peace, and riches." But, as "prosperitie engendereth evil manners," the Irish began to fight with each other after the death of these two kings; until they became at length reconciled under Simon Brek, who was imported from the original breed in Spain for the purpose of governing them; "his name being esteemed verie fortunate in those dayes." Simon was crowned in the marble chayre, anno 651, A. C. and was succeeded by a race of kings, of whom Rothesay first brought the Scots into Albion, anno 435, A. C. The Hebrides were named after Hiber, (more etymology); and Argyll, where they first settled, was so named from

Gathelus, Ard gaël. Much fighting then took place between the Picts and Scots: and Ferquard being put into a rage by the defeat of his friends, sent his son Fergus, with the "marble chayre," to Argyll, where he made "a large oration and acceptable speech," and thus founded the Scottish monarchy.

I have suggested elsewhere, that the names which these fabulating authors have adopted, betray their origin, apparently among recluse monks; picking up, at hazard, some real names from different sources, and fabricating others out of the classical languages, or, in some cases, adopting them from ancient history. These alone should have been sufficient to betray the historians and expose the fallacy or falsehood of such traditions; though they seem often to have been received by persons who ought to have known better, as well as by the vulgar at large. This Mr. Monipennie, who is however rather a borrower than an inventor, has recorded a collection from many sources, which is very instructive. Gathelus, as a sort of classic himself, may pass; but Port-gathel, and Lusitania, thus named in the third millenium of the world, are excellent. Scota and Hiber stand in the nature of effect for cause: Hermoneus seems to have been Latinized from the Hermon of the Psalms; and as to Hibert, he is a modern Norwegian instead of an ancient Egyptian. So is Simon Brek; but how he has contrived to retrograde 3000 years, Mr. Monipennie must explain. But somewhat too much of this.

These romances, however, carry their amusement with them; and we have no great reason to suppose that they were very strenuously believed by their promulgators, or by those to whom they were first given, any more than that Greece or Rome believed their own fables. In after days, antiquity may have lent them a temporary

currency, and a few of them have certainly been the cause of a good deal of historical vexation; particularly after having been distilled through the alembic of George Buchanan. It is only, however, for such people as Ritson to be enraged; labouring, as he seems to have done, under a perpetual blister. Of these "romanceës," at which a wise man should only smile, this nettlesome antiquary says, "The forgeries of Hector Boece, David Chalmers, George Buchanan, Dempster, Bruce, Bower, Lauder, Macpherson &c. stamp a disgrace,"—and so forth. And then he wittily adds, "Why the Scottish literati are more addicted to imposition than any other country, might be a curious subject of enquiry for their New Royal Society." As you are a president, Sir Walter, it is very unkind that you have made no attempt to solve this Ritsonian problem. Scota is the mother of the Scots just as Cæsarea is Noah's niece, and Galathus the father of the Gauls, and Hispalus of the Spaniards, and Italus of the Italians, and Bato of the Dutch, and Francio of the French, and Brabo of the Brabanters, and Brute of the Britons, (though he bore for his arms two lions combatant in a field gules), and Celtus of the Celts, and Romulus of the Romans; or as Albania gave her name to Albion, she being one of the Danaides who came over to Cornwall to lie in of giants, or, if you prefer it, as our island was named after Albion, a son of Neptune. Why should we quarrel with Boece or Fordun or Monipennie or Buchanan, when Solinus sends Ulysses to Scotland, and some one else tries to send Pythagoras. All the histories are of much the same value; Brute or Italus or Scota or Hispalus: or Romulus himself; and if "mister ritson" is inclined to quarrel, why will he not quarrel with Dionysius of Halicarnassus at once: and twenty more, Greek and Roman, instead of reserving all his wrath for poor Scotland.

But the history of the Stone of Dunstaffnage, real and fictitious, is not without its interest. The most remote part of this is, that it formed Jacob's pillow when he slept in the plains of Luz. This event is recorded in the tablet by which Edward accompanied this trophy when he brought it away.

> Si quid habent veri vel chronica cana fidesve,
> Clauditur hac cathedrâ nobilis ille lapis,
> Ad caput eximius Jacob quondam patriarcha
> Quem posuit, cernens numina mira poli, &c. &c.

But as I cannot afford to make these letters a repository of quotations, "for ever pouring out of one vial into another," I must refer you to Scaliger on Eusebius, where you will find abundance of learning on the subject of Jacob's stone; from which, had I been as cunning as Sterne,—and some others, Sir Walter,—I might have borrowed, and thus have gained a reputation for profound knowledge; as that learned man's writings are not much thumbed in the present day. From Syria, this pillow was brought to Egypt by Gathelus, and thence carried to Brigantia in Spain, which town he built. Brigantia is Compostella, according to Francis Tarapha; it is Corunna, says Florian del Campo, and, according to Mariana, it is Betansos. I shall make no apology for being thus minute; because my excellent predecessor, Pennant, who has seldom left any thing for his followers to do, and whom I need never repeat, has left his tale imperfect. According to the Irish records, which extend backwards for 2000 years, it was brought to Spain by the Colony of Tuath de Danan. From Spain, it was transported to Ireland by Simon Brek, above-named, who was crowned on it in the year 700 A. C.; and it was placed on the hill of Tara, where the Kings of Ireland were used to be installed in

the royal authority. Its names, with them, were Lagphail, and Clach na cineamna; the fatal stone, or the stone of fortune. Even then its "fatall destinie" attended it; namely, that wherever it was placed, there Scots should reign. But it had another property in Ireland, which does not seem to have followed it into Scotland: that of emitting a sound which indicated the propriety of the election. There is some resemblance in this case to that of Stonehenge; which was brought out of Africa to Ireland by giants, and subsequently transported in one night, by Merlin, from Naas in Kildare to the plains of Wiltshire.

It was Fergus the first, the visionary Fergus, who brought it to Scotland in the year 330 A. C. Where and whence this reverence commenced, it is impossible to conjecture: but it is not improbable that this, or some stone at least, was actually transported into Argyllshire by the true Fergus, whose date is 503, after Christ. Certain it is, that it was held to possess some talismanic or other virtues before the time of Kenneth, 834, or he would not have carried it to Scone, "there to remaine from thenceforth as a sacred token for the establishment of the Scottish kingdom in that countrie," which had before appertained to the Picts. At Scone, all the Scottish Kings were crowned on it till the time of Robert Bruce, when "King Edward langschankis" took "the said chair of merbyll" "to Westmonistar," where it may now be seen for one shilling and ninepence; thanks to the liberality of the Clergy of England. By the treaty of Northampton, it was to have been restored to Scotland; but this was never done. The prophesies have been so often reprinted, that it is almost fruitless to quote them again; except for the purpose of rendering our tale complete. The Leonine couplet stands thus:

Ni fallat fatum, Scoti quocunque locatum
Invenient lapidem, regnare tenentur ibidem.

or as Wyntoun says,

But gyf werdys falhyand be,
Quhare-evyr that stane yhe segyt se,
Dare sall the Scotis be regnand,
And lordys hale oure all that land.

There was a little chasm however, in the fulfilment of the prophecy, between Edward and the Union of the Crowns; but that did not prevent many persons from valuing it as highly as ever; since, as it is said, it reconciled them to the Union.

Such is the sense and the nonsense together, of this history. Whether we have the real stone or not, is another question; but it is not improbable that a stone was actually brought from Ireland by Fergus the second; as it was the custom for the Highland Chiefs, in later days, to receive their investiture standing on a stone. This is recorded particularly, by Martin, of a stone in Isla, remaining in his day, but now, I believe, forgotten. As to the "chair of merbyll," however, as it now stands in Westminster Abbey, it is only a fragment of a sandstone exactly similar to that of which Dunstaffnage Castle is built, and of which there is a tract along this coast. We could not indeed swear that it is a piece of the Oban sandstone, but it has every appearance of being nothing else. Some one has lately amused himself with supposing that the original stone was a meteorolite, a real Palladium, which was concealed at Dunsinnan, and that this was substituted in its place. When we are at the trouble of supposing, we may as well suppose any thing; or admit, which is much better, that it was really Jacob's pillow. It does not follow, even according

to Fluellen's logic, that because there is a black stone at Mecca, there must have been one at Dunstaffnage.

To proceed to other matters. The Connal ferry, which is one of the recorded spectacles of this neighbourhood, and which I passed, almost without notice, in a former letter, will be seen, of necessity, and felt too, by those who take the road to Fort William through Appin; but it is worth a visit, even from those who have no such design, provided they can reach it about half tide, and, particularly, during the ebb. It is then that the fall is greatest; and it is a fine specimen of rapids, to those who have not seen an American river; but to call it a sea cascade, as is done in some of the tour books, is an exaggeration which deprives the spectator, not only of his anticipated pleasures, but of those which it will really afford. The total fall does not exceed five or six feet, and is distributed over a large space. Yet the noise and the turbulence are exciting, particularly to those who may try to stem the torrent, as I did. The attempt however was as fruitless as might have been expected, though we had a strong breeze and carried all possible sail. In a mismanaged boat, it would be a dangerous experiment. The current here is caused, partly by the narrow exit to which the great extent of Loch Etive is confined and the great quantity of fresh water accumulated in it during the flood, and partly by a reef of rocks, which being highest on the north side, the fall is there greatest.

The exaggerations of travellers in things of this nature, are matter of common and daily remark and censure; yet the evil remains uncorrected, and uncorrected it is likely to remain. Where it is a question of taste, we may allow for the warmth of a poetical imagination, or the exaggerations of an unchastened one, or the hyper-

bole of a bad writer. And we may allow, in questions of mere feeling, for the different impressions which the same objects may make on the infinite varieties of the human mind. But the fault which is the subject of censure here, is either a love of the marvellous, or the affectation of feelings that have no existence. Such writers, at the sight of a cascade or a mountain, are immediately seized with a fit of the stupendous; or else they discover, when they are about to prepare for the press, that it is necessary to be astonished or alarmed. Either they hope to excite sensations which they did not themselves feel, or else they expect to gain the praise of courage, or of sentiment, or possibly, a reputation for fine writing. Enthusiasm may be laudable; it is always pardonable; but there is no merit in the display of ignorance or cowardice; and nothing is more nauseous than the affectation of either, exhibiting itself in a perpetual contortion of fears or wonders that never existed. To make such impressions on the minds of others, even where we have felt them ourselves, is a branch of good writing not easily attained: to represent ourselves as under these influences when we have not experienced them, is to fail of the desired end, and often to claim praise for courage or some other virtue to which we are not entitled. The common resource on these occasions is a collection of sonorous and hyperbolical terms. Bogs are always bottomless, and rivers are impassable, and seas run mountains high. The rocks nod and totter, the cascades thunder, the bridges tremble under the passengers, and the mountains impend over their heads, though they should be three miles off. Their road lies on the brink of unfathomable precipices, and one false step is to precipitate them ten thousand feet perpendicular—down a grassy green slope along which a sober-minded man might

walk a minuet. Caverns are gloomy and bottomless and horrid, the clouds involve them in inextricable darkness, and night falls on them with all its horrors and—enough. All these things the traveller of this species may meet, very quietly, in the Highlands, every day, just as he may find the Connal strait falling fifty feet perpendicular, and deafening the surrounding rocks and woods; but he will probably forget all his fears and wonderful wonders till he sits quietly down at night by a good fire, with a pen and ink and a bottle of wine before him, to muster up a sufficient quantity of fear and wonder for the work in view; recollecting, with his pen in his hand, when and where he ought to have been astonished or alarmed.

With the tide, ships pass this strait, as we at length did, and lie at Bunawe to deliver and receive cargoes. This furnace was built by a Lancashire company in 1753; and produces iron from Cumberland ore, and from the charcoal of the west coast; of a quality, peculiarly adapted, from its purity and consequent softness, for the tinned-plate and wire manufactory. All the coppices, from Loch Fyne to Sky, and further, are in the hands of one or other of these iron companies, and generally on long leases; and though the artist or traveller who may happen to arrive when a whole hill has fallen before the merciless axe, may lose his equanimity, he must remember that the tanner would seize on the hide if the iron founder did not make prey of the carcase. Shoes and boots are cruel enemies to sexcentesimal oak and ship-building.

It is not far from this place that was situated the Priory of Ardchattan; built, I think, by Macdougall in 1250, and then known by the name of Vallis Caulium. Bruce is said to have held a council here; and this country in general was the place of his resort for some time before he succeeded in his great design. On the west side of Scotland, there is no part so consecrated as this,

by recollections that may be considered classical, both real and fictitious. The situation of the present house of Ardchattan is very wild and romantic; at the foot of Cruachan, amidst woods, and surrounded on all hands by mountains; which, when seen from the south, form a magnificent vista finely terminated by the very striking cone of Buachaille Etive.

As we passed Bunawe, we found a boat drawing a salmon net, and, wisely purchased one large enough for our whole crew; having taken care to provide ourselves with all the requisites for cooking and eating a dinner. It was not often that we had so much wit. The sun shone bright; there was just wind enough to render our sails a pleasure instead of a source of anxiety under these lofty and squally mountains; and every thing conspired to render a voyage to the upper extremity of Loch Etive as convenient as it was, in foresight, a long and difficult undertaking. This lake, or rather inlet, (for the Highland language, with all its boasted copiousness for natural objects, has no distinction,) offers no interesting features as far as Bunawe. Here, however, it contracts and makes a bend at the same time; and, from that moment, its character is entirely changed. The rocky skirts of Cruachan on one hand, and a steep declivity, not less wild and rocky, on the other, descend as if they would meet to impede the passage; but, these bold screens receding as we advance, we enter a basin with all the apparent characters of a fresh water lake, excluding all idea and recollection of what is past and of the sea; the traces of which may nevertheless be discovered at low water, in the sea weed that hangs on the stones along the shore. With a full tide, no such suspicion could exist; while the brown colour of the water, usual at the upper extremity of all these deep inlets, assists the deception.

While this division of Loch Etive forms a magnificent

inland lake of great dimensions, it is strongly distinguished from every other in Scotland, in character and style. In the grandeur of its boundaries somewhat resembling Loch Hourn, it is very far inferior in picturesque variety. But there is a gigantic simplicity about the whole scene, which is very impressive, and which would render the presence of these objects and that variety which constitute picturesque beauty, intrusive and impertinent. I know not that Loch Etive could bear an ornament without an infringement on that aspect of solitary vastness which it presents throughout. Nor is there one. The rocks and bays on the shore, which might elsewhere attract attention, are here swallowed up in the enormous dimensions of the surrounding mountains and the wide and simple expanse of the lake. A solitary house, here fearfully solitary, situated far up in Glen Etive, is only visible when at the upper extremity; and if there be a tree, as there are in a few places on the shore, it is unseen; extinguished, as if it were a humble mountain flower, by the universal magnitude around. Here also, as at Loch Coruisk and Glen Sanicks, we experience the effect arising from simplicity of form. At the first view, the whole expanse appears comprised within a mile or two; nor is it till we find the extremity still remote and misty as we advance, and the aspect of every thing remaining unchanged, that we begin to feel and comprehend the vast and overwhelming magnitude of all around. It is hence also, perhaps, as in that singular valley, that there is here that sense of eternal silence and repose, as if, in this spot, creation had for ever slept. The billows that are seen whitening the shore are inaudible: the cascade foams down the declivity unheard, and the clouds are hurried along the tops of the mountains before the blast, but no sound of the storm reaches the ear. I wandered from my com-

panions, and the scene still was unchanged: I thought that I had proceeded but a few yards; yet the boat was a cockleshell on the shore, and the men were invisible.

There is something in the colouring of this spot which is equally singular, and which adds much to the general sublime simplicity of the whole. Rocks of grey granite mixed with pastures of a subdued brown, rise all around, from the water's edge to the lofty and misty summits of Cruachan and Buachaille Etive, which last, like a noble pyramid, crowns the whole. The unapprehended distance lends to these sober tints an atmospheric hue, which seems as if it were the local colouring of the scenery; and thus brings the entire landscape to one tone of sobriety and broad repose. As no form protrudes, so no colour intrudes itself to break in upon the consistency of the character: even the local colours at our feet partake of the general tranquillity; and all around, water, rock, and hill, and sky, is one broad mass of peace and silence; a silence that speaks to the eye and to the mind, as the absence of all sound does to the ear. The sun shone bright, yet even the sun seemed not to shine: it was as if it had never penetrated to this spot since the beginning of time; and if its beams glittered on some grey rock, or silvered the ripple on the shore or the wild flowers that peeped from beneath their mossy stones, the effect was lost amidst the universal hue, as of a northern endless twilight, that reigned around.

We boiled our salmon and dined on the shore, like banditti, beneath the shadow of the huge rocks, and near some ancient oaks, the relics of the forests of former days, magnificent even in decay. Of two which I measured, the circumference of one was 25 feet and the other 20. Their age must have been very great; and broken and decayed as they were, I should rather have expected to

find them in Sherwood forest than here; and, with the natives of that spot, they might well have stood a comparison. The storms of these wild mountains had long since broken off their branches and reduced them to pollards; but the relics had made new shoots, and the hollow trunks were now clothed in all the luxuriancy of a July foliage. No soil could well be supposed more unfitted to the production of large trees, or of a flourishing forest. Soil, indeed, there was none; the whole surface, for a great space, being nothing but a heap of granite fragments, and these also, of considerable size. The oak, every one knows, will grow from the fissures of rocks. But it is then stunted; and it is universally reputed that this tree requires a good soil to attain a large or vigorous growth. That certainly is not necessary; as this place may prove: but it is probable that the growth here is comparatively very slow, and the timber is doubtless of unusual compactness. It is plain that the skirts of Loch Etive, and probably Glen Etive also, were the seat of a forest in the ancient days of Scotland, a portion, doubtless, of the Sylva Caledonia; as is further confirmed by similar relics occurring in other equally sequestered places, and hitherto little noticed. Without such evidence, the former existence of such forests of oak would scarcely have been credited; though the abundance of fir is proved by the presence of submerged trees of this kind, everywhere.

Glen Etive extends from the head of the inlet, up to the foot of Buachaille Etive: displaying a long grey dreary valley, whence it is not difficult to reach Glenco; of the upper part of which its elegant cone forms also a principal feature, as formerly remarked. Here was the residence of Usnoth, the father of Nathos, Althos, and Ardan; and those who are not convinced of it, may read

Darthula, and ask Buachaille Etive himself; as he is much more likely to know than the two-legged Buachailles, (βεκολοι) who are now tending sheep where these heroes formerly chased deer. Besides, the name of Usnich is perpetuated in an island, and that of Dearthuil in a rock; and what further proof can be desired.

The hour was yet early, and the sun was still cheering the world beyond these mountains, when the shades of evening had fallen on us; reminding us that a long voyage yet remained between us and our floating home. As we passed the straits at Bunawe, the clouds had drawn their night-veil across the summits of Cruachan and the surrounding hills; and, on looking back, one grey interminable abyss had taken place of the scene where, but an hour before, we had spread our white sails to the mountain breeze which our good fortune had sent us. Soon, all around became grey and silent: the wind was again hushed, and nothing was heard to intrude on the universal stillness but the measured stroke of the oars, which rendered it still more profound and awful. But the faint sound as of rushing and distant waters soon broke on the night, and as we proceeded, the white rapids of the Connal strait were seen foaming through the gloom; receiving us at length, and hurrying us along with fearful swiftness and noise into the still waters beneath. The ghosts of Nathos, Althos, and Ardan, had scented the morning air, and had departed, each on his grey mist, before we reached our vessel's side.

HIGHLAND CASTLES.

I WONDER that our modern Phrenologists, as they have learnt to style themselves, have not discovered an organ of the love of the country: for if any propensity on earth is innate, beyond eating, drinking, the love of governing, and the love of rebelling, (both of which last may be comprised under the term philoonesownwayiveness), that is one. Do not mistake me, however; it is not patriotism that I mean, but that love, of which Cowper and Falstaff have babbled, each in his several way. I too, could babble of green fields: but what can be said on this subject, which many a better person has not better said, from the days of Xenophon down to those of Mr. Washington Irvin. The sprig of starved and sickly mint that languishes from a vial in the garret window of a cobler, emulating the gardens of Adonis, (the Κηποι,) and the pale, lank, trailing, flowerless geranium, that strains from a broken tea-pot in the dingy recesses of Petticoat Lane or Porridge Island, as if it would break through the smoky panes, speak the language of universal nature, not to be mistaken. Nor is this a hankering of London alone; since Pliny tells us that the fashion was the same among the coblers and tailors of Rome in his day. It was not very long ago that chance took me to Newgate. A woman was admitted to sell lilies of the valley. In a moment, the grim fellows who crowded the press-yard surrounded her: every villainous feature was relaxed; and her basket was cleared, almost faster than she could

serve her savage customers. The creature herself burst into tears: there was no difficulty in putting them into words. Sterne would have kissed her: or at least he would have written a paragraph in Tristram Shandy, and said so.

Without contradicting this general principle, there are numerous causes which modify or suppress this feeling; many persons, to whom all rural beauty, for a time at least, is concentrated in the sweet shady side of Pall Mall. That is not my business to explain at present: the matter in my head, to which all these ambages tend, was the weariness at first, and the apathy at last, which is produced by the daily and unrelaxed contemplation of mere, unvaried, natural scenery. This effect is compounded of exhaustion, and of the absence of those sources of moral interest, from which no one, who is not an anchorite, can divest himself. The celebrated speech in Terence, is as cold as it is negative: for man feels that his first and deepest interests are those which concern his species. All others are but secondary; and, of most, the influence is augmented in proportion as they operate on our moral feelings. To point out how they act in this matter, how often this happens unexpectedly and insensibly, would be to write a metaphysical essay of no small length, instead of a rambling letter.

Assuredly, such delights as arise from the contemplation of rural scenery, may be enjoyed in all their perfection in the Highlands. They abound also in variety as they do in beauty. But even these beauties weary by repetition: it is almost in vain that the brown, vacant, moor is interposed, or that after days spent in toiling through the blank sea, we are again introduced to nature in all her beauty or magnificence. Her loveliest scenes are viewed at last with apathy; they are contem-

plated but as deserts, if they want the memorials of that which alone never wearies us, man. It is him, it is the traces of his existence that we seek: we long for that moral physiognomy of a country, which marks, at least where he once lived, and thought, and felt. It is sufficient if we can trace but the image of departed greatness; for even that melancholy is pleasing which pauses over the records of ancient fame. If, among ruins, amid these traces of historical associations and of the renown of former years, if it is among the dead, that we seek for what interests us, it is because these things interest our moral feelings; because they speak to us, men, of man. This is the charm that makes the palled landscape ever new; that spreads the gilding of its enchantment over the rude desert and the ruder wave. This forms the true poetry of landscape: if man is wanting to the picture, if also the storied interest is absent, if there is nothing on which the imagination can build one, we at length wander, frigid or exhausted, amidst all the beauties and all the sublimities of the loveliest nature. Such was the reverie produced on returning to the dull country which surrounds Dunstaffnage, after quitting the wonderful but abandoned scenes of Loch Etive.

Some one, I forget who, speaking on this subject, remarks, on the ancient castles of a country, that they are the painful records of a nation's decay, contrasting also the transience of man and his fame, with the eternal freshness of nature. This is a view on the dark side of the picture: nor is it often a just one. If they mark the fugacity of his life, they are the memorials of his heroism. Neither is the contrast just; for, like the leaves of the forest in Homer's simile, man, as well as inanimate nature, is ever renewed; the same being, with the same principles, but under aspects as different as those

which nature herself, at different stages of society, assumes under his education. If too they mark a nation's decay, much oftener they are the mute records of its improvement; the proofs of its advancement in every thing that constitutes civilization. If they are registers of the heroism, so are they of the barbarism of ancient times and manners; illustrating in language that cannot be mistaken, that of which we have often but little other evidence.

These are the chief circumstances which render the castles of the Highlands, scanty in number, and generally mean in character as they are, objects of interest to the traveller. But even to the merest painter, who sees in his landscape nothing but the unanimated forms of nature, nothing in the mouldering turret or grey wall, but a mass of stone and lime, they are often important objects. They are sometimes picturesque in themselves: more generally, they are useful or essential portions of a picture; offering advantageous contrasts of colour or outline, or forming the resting point or eye of the landscape. This last is their main advantage; and that building must be small or mean indeed, which cannot thus be turned to account in the hands of an artist. Nor is their effect in this way purely mechanical: for even when the mind does not analyze the cause, it will often prove that the building is the soul of the picture, only because it is the moral soul and centre. Even the barest landscape cannot be quite divested of its moral interest: we view it as connected with animate nature; with man: and the eye, wandering over the plain, the mountain, the forest, or the wave, still seeks to rest on that point which marks where he lived; while we say to ourselves, for his use were all these things made, there abode the lord and head of all this fair scene.

Let him, however, to whom England and Wales are known, be cautious how he builds castles for himself in this country, or he will be grievously disappointed. Caerphilly alone would contain all the towers of the Highlands. He must sweep equally from his mind, Ragland and Chepstow, Kidwelly, and Manorbeer, and Pembroke; the solid magnificence of Caernarvon, the baronial splendour of Carew, and the chivalrous romance of Conway. Rude in structure and limited in dimension, the Highland castles are rarely marked by architectural ornament or elegance of design: still less are they accompanied by those irregular though picturesque arrangements and appendages, which render those of Wales so interesting, and which are so often susceptible of the finest effects in painting. They are seldom more than castellated mansions; adapted only for a small family, and destitute of all those provisions for luxury, defence, or garrison, which, at the same time confer on such buildings both their historical and picturesque interest. Considered as mansions, if they do not always prove the poverty of their ancient owners, they indicate their barbarism, and their insensibility alike to comfort and inconvenience; while they no less mark a low state of the arts, as well of design, as of all those that conduce to the enjoyments and decencies of life. This, however, is no blame; as Royalty itself does not appear to have been better accommodated. In a military point of view, they shew that garrisons were rarely maintained; and that the species of siege to which they must have been exposed, could seldom have been more than a casual assault or a short investment; as they are rarely provided with any means, either of protracted or destructive defence.

In the maritime Highlands, as might be expected, the

castles are generally situated near the margin of the water; and often, apparently, rather for the convenience of embarkation than from notions of defence. This is a natural consequence of the maritime and piratical habits of that people. Where both can be combined, however, that is generally done; as is the case with Brochel castle in Rasay, Stalker in the Linnhe Loch, Duart, and many others. This rule, of choosing a maritime situation, is not, however, exclusive: as in Isla, Finlagan was built in an inland lake, and as there is one in a similar position in Barra. On the main land, situations in the islands of lakes are not unusual; as is the case with Moy, Assynt, the castle of the Red Cumin near Kinrara, that in Loch Dochart, and another, once belonging to Mac Farlane, in Loch Lomond. Chisamil stands on an island in the sea, scarcely larger than itself, but possessing that rare and fortunate circumstance, a spring; and the island on which Stalker is built, is not much larger than the castle. At Bercaldine, on the contrary, no advantage of position whatever has been selected; and the same is true of some others of the castles in the interior. Similar neglect, in the maritime Highlands, appears at Brodick and Loch Ransa; and in numerous other places. In Inverlochy alone, as far as I recollect, advantage has been taken of a river: a practice common in England, and helping, with other circumstances formerly mentioned, to indicate its English origin.

Where there is strength of position, it is only such as belongs to ancient warfare; selected against an assault only, not against commanding ground: and where the building is not insulated, the situation usually chosen is a scarped rock, so as to present as many difficult points of access as possible. Brochel is the most complete example of this nature, being scarped all round; as the

rock on which it stands, is a sort of rude column, and the building occupies the whole area. The Castle of Dogs, in Torsa, is disposed in a similar manner, though on a much inferior elevation. Duart, also situated on an elevated rock, is accessible but on one side; as are Loch Aline castle and Aros: and each of these would be strong positions, even in modern warfare; though most of the Highland castles are within the command of cannon shot. Some, like Castle Tirim, are so immediately overlooked, that the defenders could never have shown themselves at all; but it is not likely that they often took the trouble of making any other defence than a passive one; that which patience furnishes, when opposed to fatigue and want. With regard to the insular positions, we must not now always judge of them from what we see. In the course of time, many of these islands have been converted into peninsulas, from causes well known to geologists: and thus the buildings which were once surrounded by water, are now situated on rocks standing upon shingle beaches, or on moory or meadow land. Carrick Castle in Loch Long, and Kilchurn in Lochow, are different examples of this nature; and the latter, already noticed, is a very interesting one, as indicating the great tract of land which has been recovered from the lake.

Though there is considerable diversity in the aspect of many of the Highland castles, the general principles of construction are very similar, and confined to two leading or prevailing varieties. The most simple and common plan is that of a single square and narrow tower, of rude but solid masonry, divided into three or four stories, and the lowest being commonly vaulted. This provision is sometimes extended further up; while the windows are narrow, as is the door; the whole interior being often dark and incommodious. The castle on Ailsa is a good

specimen of this class; as are those of Gylen in Kerrera and Eilan Stalker. I have no where met with any example of that remarkable and strong construction which antiquaries call the Galloway Tower; a singular circumstance, since it was common among this southern division of the Gael. Cardoness, built by my own ancestors, is still remaining, a perfect specimen of these extraordinary fortresses. As a contrivance combining defence and convenience together, nothing can exceed this most ingenious invention, which far surpasses any other project of engineers, ancient or modern.

When more accommodation was wanted, it seems generally to have been procured by surrounding the tower by a wall, and adding subsidiary buildings within: the original structure thus becoming the Keep. This is the case with Chisamil, Dunstaffnage, and many more. In other places, as at Dunvegan, Duntulm, Dunscaich, and so on, additions have been made in more recent periods, and at different times; so as to introduce further complexity into the work, but without obscuring the original design. Where these have been executed by opulent chiefs, or at a late age, the buildings assume an air of considerable magnificence, as happens at Dunvegan; but in two instances at least, the original plan has been on a liberal and somewhat splendid scale. This is the case with Kilchurn and Inverlochy, already described; the former built by Sir Colin Campbell, whose ideas had probably been expanded by his knowledge of foreign countries, obtained by travelling; the latter by Cumin, on the plan of Edward's castles, and, not improbably, as I have formerly suggested, with his assistance; if, indeed, it be not entirely English. Bute, though within the Highland border, was a Royal castle, as already mentioned; and, like Brodick and Loch Ransa, it can scarce-

ly, therefore, with propriety, be enumerated here. At any rate, its plan is quite different from that of any other Highland castle. Dunrobin and Blair, in a similar manner, though equally situated in the Highlands, were great baronial residences, of a character considerably different from those under review.

In two places, at least, in the Highlands, there are examples of that style, German, Flemish, and French, which is so common in Scotland as to have sometimes obtained the nickname of the pepper-box order. Bercaldine has the extinguisher turrets; and Grandtully, also formerly noticed, is a monkey-like specimen of that manner, of which Fyvie, Castle Fraser, and Clunie, in Aberdeenshire, are such beautiful examples.

Generally, I know not if universally, these castles are built with laid stone work; the walls being thick, and the workmanship, though rude, substantial. The vaultings are strong, but apparently designed by guess, or by what workmen call rule of thumb; but it is remarkable that I have sometimes traced in them an approach to the arch of equilibration: the result of chance, it must be supposed. There is no adherence to a Gothic pattern in the designs of the windows and doorways; which are pointed, or square, or round headed, just as caprice seems to have dictated. Generally, the lower windows are grated with iron; and sometimes the whole. Of the doorways, we can only know that they never appear to have been double, nor defended from the sides; nor have I ever seen the traces of a portcullis. I have found an oven in some of them. The fire places are commonly wide, in the ancient manner; and in Loch Aline castle, in particular, the chimney department is finely executed.

In no castle, of any style, have I ever observed any provision for a chapel or oratory: an arrangement which

is never wanting in those of England and Wales. The dungeon, which, on the contrary, was never forgotten, can now rarely be discovered; being filled with rubbish where it has been sunk, or else obscured in the general ruin where above ground. Few have any well or provision for water: a proof that blockade was as little fashionable as siege. In Chisamil alone, there was a fortified port, or basin, for the boats, under the castle walls: at the Castle of Dochart, this was on the shore of the lake in which the building was insulated. The populace, here as everywhere else, talk of subterranean communications and passages; but I have never seen the slightest evidence of what would have been of difficult construction, or rather, impracticable, in such a country. At Dunvegan, where a communication with the land might have been made by means of a draw-bridge, this was not done, but boats were used. The draw-bridge seems to have been as much too refined for the age as a portcullis; yet at Dunscaich, where communication by a boat was not easy, there is a species of trap doorway in the stone bridge, which must have been intended for a similar purpose.

Little of architectural decoration occurs in the Highland castles, and that little is of no remote date. Dunvegan presents some ornamental work resembling machicolation, in its newest part; and there are also some carvings about Duntulm. But such things are so rare, that it is difficult to recollect instances; nor do I remember even a headband, although armorial tablets and dates are not very uncommon. These, however, rarely reach beyond 1600; to which period, or later I believe, most of this decorative work will be found to belong. Even the use of chiselled sandstone, or of quoin stones of this nature, belongs to a modern age. Of buttresses, so common in the castles of Wales and England, I have never

seen any example: and in general indeed, it may be said that every thing bears marks of the most rigid economy. The beams of the roof and floors seem to have been generally laid in the wall, not on corbels, though this construction is visible at Duart; nor could I ever detect any thing to make me suppose that the interior of the ancient buildings had in any instance been plastered.

But the most remarkable feature about these castles, is the general want of defences. There is a sort of bartizan at Duart and Dunstaffnage, that might have served this purpose, very imperfectly. Always excepting Inverlochy, which is palpably English in design, I do not see how any of them could have made any other defence than that of shutting their doors and waiting the event of the enemy's weariness. There was a Gokman at Chisamil; but, in general, there is not even a warder's tower, or a look-out of any kind. There is no instance of a moat, other than the natural lake, where that exists, except in Bute, which is not properly Highland, and at Inverlochy; nor, as I remarked before, is there any instance of a proper draw-bridge, except at the latter, as far as I have seen. Not only is no attempt made to cover or defend the gate by a barbican or otherwise, but it is neither machicolated nor flanked; there is not even a loop-hole to cover it; far less a tower. Nothing, in fact, could have prevented the enemy from firing the door or mining the walls, if they had thought fit; as the foundation could not be seen, even from the roof, and no missile of any kind could be brought to bear against them. Of all that I have seen, Chisamil seems to have had the best provision in the nature of flanking defences; and even these have probably been the result, more of accident than design. Even Blair Castle, strong as it is, has had no means of defending itself against a close assault; a mine, a fire, or

a petard. The almost total want of loop holes, should prove that they made little use of missile weapons in defending these places; though I have shown elsewhere that the bow was known to them till it was superseded by fire arms. Of cannon, even of the smallest calibre, they seem to have had very little knowledge: as might be indeed conjectured from the value which the common men attached to it as late as 1745. Indeed there is scarcely a place in the ancient castles where a gun of any dimensions, even a swivel or a wall piece, could have been mounted or used. Those of Cairnburgh had probably been placed by Cromwell's men; as those at Duart were by the garrison which so long occupied that place. Not to go further into this subject, the conclusion to be drawn from it all, is such as to confirm what we already know of ancient Highland warfare. Want of regular defences proves that the methods of attack were equally barbarous and imperfect. Every action was a campaign in itself: and the business of a siege was as little likely to suit the temper as the talents of those who were accustomed to beat or be beaten with as little loss of time as possible, and whose prowess and abilities lay alike in the sword arm. To conduct even the shortest siege, is to have brought war to somewhat of that degree of organization, which is found neither in barbarous nations nor divided ones. The simplest investment requires something more than excited spirits and bodily strength, ferocity and brute force: and were it not proved by all the rest of the history of Highland warfare, we might, from the nature of their castellated architecture, safely conclude, that to these qualities, was limited all their art of war.

It cannot be easy to determine the antiquity of these castles; but, though various, we dare not refer even the

most ancient, to any very distant period. The style will not give us much aid; because want of means, and badness of design and execution, are here equivalent terms. There can be no doubt that the most ancient inhabitants occupied, as defences, those dunes, or loose stone works, whether Danish or Celtic, that have been described elsewhere: including under this general term, all the ancient forts, whether conical towers or low circular enclosures. It is very doubtful whether the early Norwegians erected any buildings in stone and lime in the west; since neither Ireland nor Scotland can, as far as is known, produce such a specimen from their hands: and, in the account of Iona, I have shown that stone buildings were not common or numerous in Ireland, the more opulent or civilized country, till about 1171, the date of O'Connor's castle. I have noticed elsewhere, that when John, Lord of the Isles, was summoned by Alexander the second to Kerrera, he was required to deliver up Cairnburgh and some other castles, whose names are not given, then in his possession. Assuredly, there are no remains, at Cairnburgh, of any building of nearly so high a date; and though we cannot now conjecture where the others were situated, it is not likely that there is now existing any castle of that remote æra. The retreat of the Norwegians having been effected in 1266, that date therefore may probably be safely assumed as the highest possible limit for any of the Highland castles, at least on the west coast. It has been imagined that castle Rushen, in the Isle of Mann, is not only of the Norwegian æra, but as early as 900. But every thing in its style, solidity, and bulk, discountenances such a supposition, as England itself has no analogous building before the time of William: and though the date be lost, with almost every thing else of antient record that belongs to this island,

the age of this castle, even if really Norwegian, is not likely to be higher than that of St. Magnus in Orkney, said to have been founded by Ronald in 1138, or that of the palace, which is of a later date. The evidence of the far higher antiquity just mentioned, founded on a date within it, is plainly imaginary; because the Arabic numerals in which that date is recorded were not then in use; being scarcely indeed known till very long after. From some ascertained dates in the Highland castles, we may possibly be assisted in conjecturing as to the rest. Dunrobin is said to contain parts as old as 1100, the reign of Alexander I; but this is an extreme instance, and nothing analogous to it occurs in other districts of the Highlands. Kilchurn was built in 1440 only; and that is now a ruin of old date. The oldest part of Drummond Castle, if that can be considered Highland, is only of 1493. The date of Blair is unknown; but it probably does not ascend much beyond the sway of the Wolf of Badenoch, or materially prior to the time of Bruce, as I remarked when formerly describing that district. Inverlochy, from internal evidence, should be of the same age, as I have already shown; certainly not before Edward the first; and the same general rule will apply to Dunolly, Dunstaffnage, and the castles of Arran. Fordun says, that Brodick and Ranza were royal castles in 1380; but the former at least was demolished in 1456, and rebuilt by James V. If Dunvegan was built by the great Rory Macleod, it does not ascend higher, or even so high. Much of it is modern. Duart is much later, taking the evidence of its own date. The castles of the Sinclairs in Caithness are far posterior to the treaty of Alexander. Moy, now in ruins, which ought to be among the most ancient, is, as I have shown, only of 1665, from the evidence preserved on it. It may be

taken as a general rule here, that the castles of the smaller clans, or ramifications, cannot be of a higher antiquity than the dismemberment of the great dynasties; and thus, many of them will be brought down to a period not much prior to James the first, and sometimes later. Fordun indeed says that there were wooden castles in Moray as late as 1200, or later, since he mentions such buildings as having been burnt in Gillespoc's rebellion in 1228. As the more ancient religious establishments seem to have been built of wood, and from this circumstance, it is not impossible that castles or residences of this construction preceded the age of stone castles in the Highlands, as is well known to have been the case in Ireland. Were we to seek for antiquity in the west, it should be in Isla and Cantyre, the seats of Macdougall and Macdonald. But the castles of Isla that were probably the most ancient, have disappeared. Dunolly, as I remarked lately, bears no marks of high antiquity; and its highest age could scarcely pass 1300, whatever building might have occupied the same situation in the time of Somerlid. Castle Swin has probably been among the most ancient in Cantyre; but, of all those of the Macdonald which are remaining, none can be of a very distant date. It is probable that the ruins of Knock, in Sky, are among the oldest; as is, apparently, Moil Castle. Duntulm and Dunscaich are palpably recent; not going beyond 1600. It is often safe to judge by the degree of ruin; because it is time, and not force, that has operated on them all. Thus the treaty with Edward IV was dated from Ardtorinish in 1441; and that has long been a complete ruin, though inhabited by John Lord of the Isles in 1641. Hence it is probably one of the most ancient mansions of these princes; having shared the fate of Finlagan, of the castles of dogs in Morven and Torsa,

and of the castle of Freuchlan in the Sound of Isla. But I need not pursue further a subject which involves so much of conjecture, and which would not be of much moment could it be all determined. Only, I may add, that we see little or nothing in the castles of the Highlands, to remind us of the "pomp of elder days." The term castle must not be allowed to mislead us. If no pealing anthems arose in their chapels, neither did "throngs of knights and barons bold" hold here their state. The Highland chief was a wolf in his den, and his castle was the strong hold whence he issued, like the petty barons of Germany in ancient days, to conduct a feud against a rival, to roam the seas as a pirate, or to plunder the lands of his defenceless neighbours. The history of their ancient manners illustrates that of their residences; and these, in turn, confirm what little we know of the other. Such at least they became after the secession of Norway; from which period they seem to have gradually declined in civilization as they continued to be subdivided, until, by forming nearer connexions with Scotland, and, in some later instances, with France, they again resumed a polish which their diminished means scarcely allowed them to display in their modes of living, until the whole system was for ever subverted by events too familiar to require mention.

MORVEN, LOCH ALINE, LOCH SUNART, STRONTIAN, AIRDNAMURCHAN, LOCH MOIDART, LOCH MORRER, LOCH NEVISH.

THAT part of Morven which bounds the Sound of Mull is now as familiar as Cheapside; but very few indeed, if any, have explored the wilds of this barren region. Loch Aline, however, might fairly demand a few hours from the various dilettantes who make the voyage from Oban to Aros; but it is unhonoured because unrecorded. In the remainder of this province, I know not that there is much to tempt a traveller from his way; although much time is often spent in seeing many things far less deserving of attention.

Morven is a mere heap of mountains, rude in character, without presenting much interest, either in their heights or their forms. He also who may have voyaged along the coast from Cantyre and been charmed with the beauty of the shores, must here prepare for disappointment. With little exception, they are as uninteresting as the interior land; and, with the exception of the sea lochs, the same may be nearly said to hold true, henceforward, even to Cape Rath. On the side of the Linnhe Loch there is so little to attract attention, that I shall pass over the whole without scruple: and the same is true of the whole dreary shore that bounds the Sound of Mull, with the exception only of a space from the entrance of this channel to that of Loch Aline.

Immediately within the point, at a spot marked by some rocky islands, there is a shallow bay of considerable beauty, superior, certainly, to any thing on the opposite

shore of Mull. Rocks and trees disposed in various romantic forms, and intermixed with fields, rise immediately from the water; and above, the mountain sweeps boldly up, covered with continuous woods that are interspersed with rocks, open glades, and torrents. One considerable river streams down from the very mountain summit, in a wooded and rocky ravine, presenting along its course a great variety of wild and close scenery. From the shoulder of this hill also, a very fine view is obtained of the entrance of the Sound, and of the Bay of Oban; Duart Castle forming a conspicuous object, and the horizon, southward, being bounded by the fine form of Scarba and the intricacies of that shore. Hence to Loch Aline the shore is generally accessible, and presents a succession of the same wild and pleasing scenes; some interest also being derived from, the name I ought to say, rather than the ruins of Ardtorinish Castle, since it is so complete a ruin as to be quite unworthy of notice, except for its historical recollections. It was one of the numerous mansions of the Lords of the Isles; and, in 1441, the celebrated treaty with Edward IV, noticed in the preceding letter, was dated from it. John, Lord of the Isles, resided there in 1641; but I am not aware that its ulterior history is known. Another castle on this shore, called the Castle of Dogs, and reputed to be a hunting mansion of the same Chiefs, is equally a ruin and equally without interest.

It is far otherwise with Loch Aline Castle, which is not only in perfect preservation, but is, from its commanding and beautiful situation, one of the most picturesque among the Highland Castles. Though only a square tower, with turrets and a corbel table, its proportions confer on it a beauty rarely found in these buildings. It has also the reputation of having been besieged

by Colkitto for Montrose. If Loch Aline itself is not so beautiful as its name promises, it must be remembered that all beauty is comparative, and that, for Morven, it is really a jewel. While it forms a safe and convenient anchorage, the sides are steep and woody, but without being very strongly marked; the outline also being too uniform to admit of any picturesque character, at least towards the lower part. But at the upper end, it is entirely changed; becoming rocky, intricate, and various with ornament; and receiving two very romantic streams, which, forcing their tortuous way in deep and irregular rocky and wooded channels, fall into it at opposite angles. Here it indeed deserves the name of beautiful; as far at least as beauty can result from that species of close mountain scenery, and from the accumulation in a small space, of woods and rocks and brawling streams and cascades and wild bridges, intermingled also with farms and fields, and gradually blending with the more placid scenery of the loch itself. Though a sea loch, being closed at the lower extremity, and wooded as it is, it has all the characters of a fresh water lake. To pursue these wild torrents, leads to much more of the same kind of alpine and rude landscape: the southern stream ascending the mountain amid rocks and woods, and the northern, which is of much more importance, conducting to a close, but green and prolonged valley, which leads to Loch Arienas, whence this river has its origin. But the main feature at the head of this loch, giving great additional importance to every thing else, is the castle, boldly perched on a high rock overhanging the water, as if the architect had chosen the situation where its effect should be finest. In a military view, it is a very strong position, on the ancient system: and the building is equally strong. Of the numerous landscapes

which it affords, there are none, of which the composition is not excellent; but the finest will be found from the higher grounds beyond, where the castle occupies the middle ground, surrounded by all that intricacy of ornament already mentioned, and backed by the simple and beautiful expanse of the water.

I wish that Loch Aline had equally struck you, since, lying in the track of the "Lord of the Isles," we should have been regaled with a description from your pen instead of mine; with a few bright poetical images instead of a prosaic detail. You might there too have seen some specimens of the Highland fair, which would probably have inspired that pen also, and have cost you at least half a canto more. I have, in another place, made honourable mention of Isla in the matter of beauty; and lest war should be declared between Isla and Morven, I am bound to say that Loch Aline may stand for the prize whenever it pleases; and you, if you choose it, shall enact Paris. It was in the character of Æsculapius, however, that I made the discovery; and really if all patients were like the three Miss Macdonalds, though only the daughters of a little farmer, I know not what better you and I could do than turn physicians. I vow to all the Heathen deities who have a right to vows on such occasions, that they disturbed my repose for a week, and that every turn of the iron cable on the windlass as we weighed anchor to take our leave, grated on my heart as well as my ears. If the Bragelas and the Agandeccas were really Morven ladies, the breed has assuredly not deteriorated.

The next day found us at anchor in Loch Sunart; for it is hence that all else of Morven which is worth seeing, must be seen. The anchorage itself is in a picturesque spot, called Loch Drumbuy, between the Island of Oransa

and the main; and the four islands which here lie near the entrance of Loch Teachus form a little archipelago, the channels and bays of which are in many places picturesque, and always entertaining. The opposite high land of Airdnamurchan is also bold, and somewhat fine, while the whole of this scenery presents more character than any part of the preceding Sound of Mull. There is no want of wood, and no want of rocks; and, with these and a bright sea, it rarely happens that nature does not manage, on these coasts, to produce something beautiful. Hence also are seen the two most remarkable mountains of Morven, Ben-hun and Ben-y-attan; rising in a conical form above the general mass of the rest, and offering, to geologists at least, one of the most extraordinary positions for coal that has ever been recorded.

The valley which extends hence to Loch Aline, is wild, wooded, and romantic, containing a chain of lakes, consisting of Loch Teachus, Loch Derienaman, and Loch Arienas; the first being a maritime inlet. This tract indeed is almost the only tolerable part of Morven, conveying a far different impression of it from either of its wild mountain shores. A shoal at the entrance obliged us to quit our boat; and while some discussions were held for the purpose of procuring another, I asked one of the people, who, like all these maritime Highlanders, now speak a tolerable sort of Scottish dialect, how long the lake was, as its termination was not very well defined from the point where I stood—"It will be about twanty mile," was the answer.—"Twenty miles! surely it cannot be so much."—"May be it will be twalve."—"It does not seem more than four."—"Indeed I'm thinking ye're right."—"Really, my friend, you seem to know nothing about the matter."—"Troth I canna say I do."—And this is a very common end of all enquiries in the High-

lands; where, at least, the experienced doubter is on his guard. If he is a raw traveller, or not naturally of analytical habits, he will often be decieved, unless he has recourse to some such mode of cross examination; since the first answer is always given with confidence, and an answer is at hand for all enquiries. Unfortunately, it will rarely bear a scrutiny; the second answer, as Boswell long ago remarked, "nullifying the effect of the first." This is a very common feature in the Highland character; and there is, of course, no difficulty in collecting abundant information on all points, historical, statistical, or geographical: as if the people had formed that conspiracy against the note book of a traveller, which has been occasionally practised on credulous and trading tourists. That, however, is not the fact: and I, who flatter myself that I am also a good-natured fellow, am inclined to attribute it, in them, to civility and good nature chiefly; rather than to pride, or to a wish to avoid the appearance of ignorance respecting their country; as has been said. Had it any very strong motives of this kind, there would be a persistence in that which is given up with the greatest good humour, when it is found that it does not pass.

I admit the inconvenience, however; particularly that it has been felt by others. It is true enough, as Johnson said, that he who here desires to acquire knowledge, "may saturate his soul with it;" but the cautious enquirer who suffers the pains of ignorance, will take care how he lulls them by the opiate of ordinary information. And, in general, the ulterior enquiries only increase the evil: just as you diminish the value of a fraction by multiplying its denominator; since the more you multiply this information, the less, you will find, you possess. This is to retrograde in learning, by the multitude of your ac-

quisitions; to know less the more you learn. If you sift too hard also, it is a chance that you get but chaff; as in this case of Loch Teachus. I will not pretend to have suffered much from this evil myself; but I know that it is as common a complaint of travellers now, as it was in the days of Johnson and Boswell. Hence these persons complain that they have smarted by recording all they had heard; and that even their informers have denied their information, when they have afterwards seen it in print. Let every man grumble for himself; and learn, if he means to write books, to doubt betimes, in other matters than Highland information. I believe, myself, that it is generally the result of carelessness or good nature, as I said before: if there is a portion of the desire to appear informed, intermixed, I know not that this is very peculiar to these people; as no one willingly appears ignorant of what he ought to have known. Nor do I think them a credulous people; and, still less, what Mr. Pinkerton, in his wrath, pronounces them to be. Perhaps, indeed, the desire not to appear ignorant, may have a greater influence here among the common people than elsewhere; the consequence of a pride which renders the "nil admirari" a noted and amusing part of their character. A Highlander thinks it beneath his dignity to appear surprised at any thing new, as is well known; and if the effects of this feeling are sometimes as ludicrous as in the well-known tale of the artichokes, they are at all times matter of amusement rather than of censure. Let those who wish to get at the truth here, try for it: they may fail, and be deceived, as I have sometimes been; but they will at least have the consolation of having used all their efforts to be correct.

There is a vitrified fort on the north side of Loch Teachus, enumerated in the list formerly given; but it

is one of the smallest which I have seen. The vitrification of the wall is tolerably complete, for the reasons elsewhere assigned; as the materials are of fusible trap. This specimen offers no peculiar interest; excepting that it serves to prove what I formerly showed; namely, that these buildings were in no wise connected for the purpose of signal stations, but were, in every respect, independent fortifications, or strong places of refuge. This specimen lies on the side of the hill that bounds this secluded valley, and is entirely cut off from any communication with the surrounding country; nor is there any other similar work within view of it.

It is a long day's voyage in a boat, hence to Strontian; nor could it be performed in a day, except by taking advantage both of the flood and the ebb; unless indeed there were to be two leading winds. With all our industry, and after embarking at six in the morning, it was midnight when we reached our anchorage. This is a magnificent inlet, full of variety and beauty on both its shores, even from the one extremity to the other; and, from its frequent changes of character and the great indentations of its outline, always entertaining. But it is all on too ample a scale to afford any general landscapes capable of conveying an idea of its style or its merits. It is chiefly by coasting along the shores that its beauties will be rightly appreciated; and it may be considered, therefore, rather as affording fine specimens of shore scenery than as forming a fine whole. To see it justly, the traveller should ascend under one shore and return by the other; as the breadth of Loch Sunart is such, that, from a middle line, the beauties of both sides would be nearly lost.

The ruin of a castle, perched on a promontory not very far from Loch Teachus, and on the Airdnamurchan side, forms a very picturesque object. But the most

fertile portion in scenery is the upper extremity, where, having made a considerable turn, it appears to form an inland lake. The Morven side is here strongly contrasted with the opposite one; being rocky and steep, and covered with broken or continuous coppices and scattered trees. This portion will scarcely be intelligible, or display its beauties, except after landing, or, at least, by following closely every turn of the shore. Thus viewed, it presents that class of scenery which characterizes Loch Cateran; lofty and broken rocks and mountain acclivities, ornamented with wild wood springing up everywhere, cascades tumbling down the steep precipices and declivities, and, beneath, an intricate and rocky belt of flattish land, indented in the most various and picturesque manner, and washed by water that we scarcely can believe to be the sea when we contemplate the trees which skirt its margin and almost spring from its very waves. A few farms, each with its boat drawn up within its little rocky creek, add much to the interest of the whole. But what, perhaps, will chiefly attract attention here, are the remains of an ancient oak forest, which, it is probable, once occupied the whole range of these hills, and of which the present coppices are the posterity. Such specimens as I examined, though broken and hollow, are still producing branches, and flourishing like those in Loch Etive, which they exactly resemble. One, the only one which I had an opportunity of measuring, was twenty-five feet in circumference. The age of these cannot well be less than six centuries; it may easily be more; and with those of Loch Etive, they are the only living proofs and remains that I have met with of the ancient forests of oak, which, doubtless, as well as those of fir, once covered great portions of Scotland. The Sylva Caledonia, made, by the error of Ptolemy's geography, to occupy the whole north of Scot-

land, "υπερ" the Caledonians, must, if the ancient accounts be true, have covered the whole west coast, from Loch Lomond to Inverness; in which case the population must have been very limited. This fact, which has not been questioned, leads to some important conclusions respecting the state of the ancient Celtic population supposed to have inhabited these districts, as it does with regard to the poetical records. But its value will appear on various occasions hereafter, without rendering it necessary to enter into any details at present.

Of Strontian, I have little to say. It is a wild and uninteresting country, though there is some grandeur in one scene, in a deep valley which is terminated by the fine form of Scuir Donald. The lead mine is the cause of a considerable population, and has caused much improvement of small lots of land that would have otherwise remained in pasture: producing exactly the same effects which follow on the sea shores from the fisheries and the manufacture of kelp. On the mineralogy of this mine I need not trouble you further than to say, that it has produced a great variety of the most rare calcareous spars, with splendid specimens of Staurolite; and that it was the first place where the Carbonat of Strontian, and indeed the peculiar earth which has been named from this village, was found.

To the proprietors, the value of this mine has been vacillating, and I believe that it never produced much profit; while, for a long series of years past, it was quite dormant. We must not, however, measure its value to the country, by the profit which it has yielded. As a manufactory, finding work and wages for a people which is but too often in want of both, it has been valuable, even when it has merely paid its expenses. It is not to be desired, certainly, that either the proprietors or the

adventurers should lose by mining; but though they should not gain, the working of a mine will always be a desirable resource. That which adds nothing to the capital of a country, it must be admitted, is not a very valuable species of manufacture. But in the Highlands, we must remember, it is a great gain to be able to feed the people better, and even to feed more people, could we be sure of doing that permanently. Thus, even unproductive labour acquires a political value here, provided only it can raise the funds necessary for its maintenance: and those who may doubt this, should recollect that the case of a mine, of Strontian, or of any manufactory which does no more, or which raises nothing for the capitalist, is an exact parallel to a fishery for mere domestic consumption. Were this a common manufactory, however, it must cease at the moment it ceases to return a profit to the capitalist: but in mining, fortunately, the event is always uncertain; and thus hope operates in keeping the work afloat, to the advantage of the labourers, long after it has ceased to be advantageous to their employers. Even on this ground, it were to be wished that more mines could be discovered in the Highlands: provided at least, these were not capricious and temporary; in which case the evil often far outweighs the benefit. To do more than this, it need not be said, would be still more desirable. But as far as experience has hitherto gone, the Highland mountains do not appear metalliferous, to use a technical term. No one, it is true, can foresee when or where a mine may be discovered: but it is a strong presumption against the Highlands in this respect, that, after much minute search, so few indications should have been found, and that those veins which have been discovered should have proved so insignificant.

Strontian possesses now an excellent inn: it possessed

a very original one at least, when I visited it a few years ago from Balahulish. When I enquired for the inn to which we had been recommended on that occasion, we found that it was not built: it was only an inn "in posse." As an interim accommodation to wet and weary travellers, they had begun to pull down the old one before building the new. It was pretty much the same out or in, for it had only half a roof; being, in fact, a barn, or rather a single room, open to the sky; and to a Strontian sky. As the rain and wind came with a slant, the walls did some good, while, like old Elwes, the man picked out the driest corner for the beds; and thus, with an umbrella to cover the most important parts, a few sheep to keep us warm, and a stoup of whisky, I believe we both contrived to sleep out the shower. But English travellers remark, what Birt observed a century ago, that in these Highland inns, whether you sleep under the sky, or a black roof, or a dimity tester, whether you have any thing to eat or nothing, attendance or none, you must pay as much for the want of every thing, as you do for the enjoyment of every thing at Ferrybridge or Barnbymoor. In regulating his prices, Donald seems to have forgotten that he is asking for a turnip the price of a pine apple, because the former is called fruit as well as the latter; that there is some difference between the value of a feather bed, a carpeted room, good furniture, prompt attendance, light, air, and cleanliness, and between a dingy crib, a mud floor, a smoky hut, darkness, dirt, and inattention. He forgets also that his abominable mutton and potatoes are not an English dinner, and that salt herrings and milk are not tea and sugar, and cream and eggs, and ham and muffins. And he forgets further that he has neither such rent nor taxes, nor such waiters to maintain, nor such prices to pay, and that he is not to

put five hundred per cent. on the value of his oatcakes and five thousand on that of his potatoes. Such however is the fact; and it is the same in the stable as the parlour; the expense of travelling in the Highlands being as great, in the latter point much greater, than on the north road, or on almost any English road; while, if the comparative value of the commodities were to enter into the calculation, it is five times greater. It is vain to say that he must thus make up for the shortness of his season; because his inn is never a distinct trade. It is not his sole capital, because he is a farmer and it is his farm house. His servants are discharged when the season is over; and whatever capital might be embarked in this subsidiary employment, would be fairly repaid by a more just system of prices. I fear we must agree with southern travellers, that it is part of that general practice of which they all complain.

This question of high profits, and of the power of levying them which is thrown into a few hands, is a much graver matter, however, than in the case of Donald and his petty extortions. It is this which, in a commercial country, produces a constant tendency in the commercial class to rise, while others are stationary or sinking. The natural progress of commerce would not otherwise generate that extreme difference among the different classes of the community, which we everywhere see, and see more strikingly every day; in the arts and the professions, and in the proprietors of land rents when compared to traders, and of which the effect, in the latter case at least, is so decidedly evil. In detail, this is most sensible, if we merely compare the rate, the mere rate, of profits in our own day, to what it was formerly. It is far more sensible in its consequences. It is in vain to say, as the economists may and do say, that it is

checked by competition, and that it can never occur but in the case of monopoly. There are indeed many monopolies: there are far more than are commonly suspected; more direct combinations, with many indirect ones which it requires some care to discover. There is scarcely a principal trade in Britain that is not, in one or other of these senses, a monopoly: implying a direct general understanding to adhere to a certain price against the public: in the case of bookselling, and porter brewing, and distilling, and many more, there is an absolute and understood combination, as perfect as, and a thousand times more injurious than, the miserable and ineffectual associations of journeymen bootclosers and "flints," against which the law, in its sapience, fulminates all its thunders. "But petty rogues submit to fate, that great ones may enjoy the state." But even where no monopoly, either absolute or indirect, exists, the merchant has it always, and exclusively, in his power, to raise his profits, for the purpose of relieving himself from increasing taxation, as he in fact does; and thus, while all those who have nothing to sell are sinking in wealth, he is rising on their ruins. And, practically, it is perfectly easy to trace the gradual rise in the proportion of commercial profits, always running parallel to the increase of taxation. This is, in fact, one of the great evils, the greatest perhaps, that follows increasing taxation. In any case, no care can prevent it from becoming unequal, from various causes; but, in a commercial country, it tends perpetually to augment the distinction between the commercial and the non-commercial classes of society, and to elevate the one on the depression of the other. It is a great mistake to suppose that this only happens in the case of customs or excise, where the merchant adds a profit on the tax as well as on the commodity; since,

by the very same process, he contrives to relieve himself even from the consequences of a direct tax; a property tax or a poll tax. The process is easy, and easily traced. It is not immediate. But the greater and least numerous traders, the real monopolists perhaps, first increase the rate of their profit. By degrees it is discovered that one species of capital is producing a higher profit than another. Thus the example spreads; and, gradually, the new rate pervades all commerce, and the people, who cannot thus relieve themselves, yield, and subside in the scale of society. Of the benefits that flow from this predominance of the commercial class, we may be allowed to doubt; notwithstanding all that has been said in its favour: but this is a wide question. Whatever they may be, they are at least a good deal balanced by that detestable system which makes all merit to consist in wealth alone, and of which England is so distinguished an example; by a system which considers honesty, only in as far as it is the best policy; by feelings to which money is honour, religion, talents, merit, every thing; and by the prevalence of a class, of whom Cicero says, justly—what I will not quote. Nor is this only limited to their own crafts and sept; as it has generated that similar tone through all species of society, for which Britain is so peculiarly notorious throughout Europe. "Chi non hà non sà, e chi non hà non è." But I must not stray so far from the roofless inn of Strontian; this is matter for a book.

The interior country from Strontian to Airdnamurchan Point, is mountainous, bare, and wild; and utterly without interest unless when we approximate to the sea shores. From the summit of Ben y And, near to Mingary Castle, there is a fine view, including part of Loch Sunart, of the Sound of Mull, and of the western sea,

together with the mountains of Mull and Morven; affording also views of Egg and of Rum, and a more distant glimpse of the hills of Sky. That castle, situated on a low rock, or rather ledge of rocks, immediately on the edge of the sea, is still entire, at least as a ruin, and of considerable dimensions; consisting of one irregular square attached to another, and forming a valuable object on a coast which is in itself without attractions. Round the whole of Airdnamurchan promontory indeed, the shore is very uninteresting, and even repulsive; fortunately, perhaps, for the adventurous traveller by water, as it is generally both difficult and dangerous to land, on account of the prevalence of the western swell and of its savage and rocky character. The cliffs which bound the whole, rarely rise beyond 60 and 100 feet, and they are utterly without beauty or character. Still, those who may succeed in threading all their mazes, will find some amusement, even in the hazard; together with occasional coves and recesses, not quite void of attraction, except to those who may have been already satiated with this class of scenery.

The coast becomes gradually low and intricate towards the north, and in proceeding eastward beyond Ardremonish Point; at length blending with a deep and often shallow bay which includes Loch Moidart and Kintra Loch. There is very little to interest an ordinary traveller here, except at Loch Moidart itself; and I ought to add that it is a dangerous and awkward bay to trust, on account of the facility of becoming embayed in a west wind, and the scarcity of places of refuge. Loch Moidart is rendered interesting by its singular and deceptive intricacy, as well as by the height and character of the land; but still more by the remains of Castle Tirim, which occupies a very picturesque elevation on

the margin of the sea, and is singularly happy in its disposition, when compared to most of the Highland castles. Not, however, that it owes any thing, either to its bulk, which is not considerable, or to its architectural style, which is nothing; the effect arising solely from the irregular disposition of its parts.

There is not much temptation to thread the mazes of Loch Aylort or Lochan na nuagh from the sea; although, in the former, there is much grandeur, and, in the latter, a very amusing, and often a very picturesque intricacy. But from Loch Moidart even to Glen Elg, this species of scenery, under very slender variations, occurs so repeatedly that we become wearied of it, and are glad to leave much unseen; particularly as it can only be attained with much risk, and with much labour and expense of time. Enough of it will occur from Arasaik to Loch Hourn to satiate any one; and there is the greater reason for neglecting the line of coast from Loch Moidart to the Point of Arasaik, that as much of it as is necessary may be seen in the inland tour from Fort William to this place, formerly described.

From Arasaik to the river which issues from Loch Morrer, the coast is rocky, and indented by numerous creeks; but neither high, nor offering any peculiar features to attract attention. Loch Morrer is a fresh water lake, and one of considerable note; since it is about ten miles in length, although narrow throughout. It is separated from the sea, however, by a short space, not exceeding half a mile. It lies in a very inaccessible country, and is therefore little known; but it may be visited with sufficient ease from the sea coast, or from Loch Nevish, with which it communicates by means of a road. It is a fine piece of water, with a lofty, and often a rugged, boundary; the mountains toward the east end,

in particular, being of great altitude, and of marked character.

Loch Nevish, like many other parts of the coast, promises, when seen from the shores of Sky, what it does not perform. The general outlines of the hills are fine, and they are among the highest on the western coast; but whatever grandeur they may possess at a distance, the loch, when within it, derives no peculiar character from them. It is a very spacious inlet; presenting, immediately after entering it, a wide basin, and, after a long course, taking an acute turn; thus continuing for some miles further, when it had appeared terminated. The praise of grandeur cannot be denied to it; for that effect is produced, no less by its absolute dimensions, than by the great simplicity of its shores and of the declivities of the hills which rise from it. But the same cause entirely robs it of all pretensions to picturesque beauty; since, besides this general uniformity and insipidity of the leading features, it is quite void of ornament, without wood, and almost without rocks. Under the guidance of art, with trees and cultivation, it might be beautiful. We neither miss nor wish for these improvements in such places as Loch Hourn, where nature has taken all the work into her own hands; but, here, the want leaves a painful blank, and even tends to sink the landscape to a lower degree than it really holds in the scale. To judge what art might do for Loch Nevish, it is only necessary to look at Loch Duich, which, with very little decision of character, and with far less of grandeur, is rendered one of the most engaging spots on the coast, merely from the casual circumstance of the trees which are scattered about it, and from the splendour and variety which are thus given to a surface otherwise bare, smooth, and green.

But I must not, though I have now passed Morven, forget that Ossian has some claims on me; as the association, though a groundless one, is too strong and too fixed to be easily dissolved. I would willingly have left this question to the repose into which it has recently fallen: but as I have so often questioned some of the vulgar traditions that relate to this poet and his dynasty, I owe him such little reparation as it is in my power to make. He claims and deserves, however, a separate letter.

OSSIAN.

THE Scioppius' and the Salmasius', the Ritsons and the Pinkertons, the Buchanans and the Llwyds, never fought harder, nor with much more improper tools, than the several combatants in the Ossianic war. But even the Trojan war ended at last, and so has this; although there are still some points on which the peace is but of a grumbling and discontented character. I am not about to blow the trumpet again, you may well believe; but if you are not quite as well acquainted with a certain class of English semiliterati and demisemiliterati, as myself, you will be surprised to find that there are hundreds who still believe the whole to have been an arrant forgery. Such have been the effects of Johnson's bow-wowing, and of our caustic countryman, Laing's, arguments: a consequence, indeed, common enough in many parallel cases, where those who care little about the result, retire with their first or strongest impressions, or leave the ground, believing that the Chicken is beaten because "his day-lights are done up." As little is it necessary, at this day, to ask, even of ourselves, what is the real merit of this poetry; because the public has at length pronounced that verdict, such as it is, whence there is no appeal. To have passed through the double distillation of Macpherson and Cesarotti without having become a caput mortuum, is some proof of merit; as poetry has rarely been subjected to such chemistry as this, without the gasification and loss of its essence. But this is not my affair at present.

If it is an amusing office to watch the particular varieties of men on whom these compositions operated, independently of national feelings or habits, it would not be less so to note those to whom, though possessed of taste and literature, and uninfluenced by party feelings, they have seemed a dead letter. Napoleon is not an unimportant instance, in this view: but this is a task which belongs to you, rather than to me. Yet I think we may vindicate the warmth of admiration of some of our countrymen, on very honest grounds; and find, without much difficulty, the natural and justifiable sources of that declared pleasure which has so often been attributed to exclusive national partiality, and, not unfrequently, to that mala fides which has been said to render a Scot more anxious for the reputation of his country than for truth or enquiry. We, who do not understand the original language, and who recollect also that this poetry has been robbed, by translation, not only of mere metre, but of its variety of metres, ought to recollect the argumentum ad verecundiam, and concede that there may be most important grounds of beauty and sources of admiration, of which we can have no right to judge, and respecting which we ought to believe the assertions of those competent and honourable men, to whom the language is their native tongue. In a general view, it would be the height of injustice to act otherwise: and, in this case, a verdict of condemnation is passed against a whole people, under the influence of excited feelings; because of a general impression respecting their nationality, and of some undue warmth on their part, which may be justified by the opposition and ridicule which they experienced.

It is a further defence of the honest admiration of Highland scholars, in this instance, not only that no translation, no words from another language, can convey the

ideas inherent in the original one, because all language is a complication of associations, but that, in this case, there are united with these, a thousand other associations, which they have drawn in with their very breath, and which are, to a certain extent, independent of the mere meaning of the words, even were these understood in all their most remote allusions. The very physical terms, the mist, the mountain, and the glen, the voice of the storm, and even the flight of the thistle's down, recall to these the sports of their childhood, the dreams of their youth, their hopes, and fears, and loves, and disappointments. The vision of life comes before them with all its sweetly remembered pleasures, and with those pains which time has almost softened to pleasure. These are visions also that pass like lightning across the mind; scarcely noticed by those who do not analyze their feelings to nothing, yet operating their full effects on the unconscious reader; causing that source of delight which belongs to the native only, and generating those pleasures which themselves know not how to define, and which we would thoughtlessly refuse them. Nor, in this species of poetry, where natural images and allusions form so important a feature, is it a matter of small consequence, towards understanding, no less than enjoying it, that we are versant in the exact objects described; familiar, and long familiar, with these in all their varieties, and appearances, and dresses. It is peculiarly necessary to possess this acquaintance with them, when they in any way differ from the ordinary objects and aspects of nature. As little could the native of Bengal appreciate the imagery of a polar winter, as the Greenlander feel that which is derived from all the luxuriance of a tropical region: nor need we ask what impression any descriptive poetry could make on him who had been born and brought up

in the darkness of a cavern, or on a desert rock of the ocean. He who has been confined to London from his birth, or even he to whom its smiling and luxuriant plains alone are known, is scarcely sensible to the impressions of the Ossianic imagery; and if there could be a doubt of this, it would be confirmed by the acquired experience of all those who, even as strangers in the Highlands, have become acquainted with their physical appearances: have listened to the fury of their torrents and the roar of their waves, have threaded the mazes of their deep glens and ravines, witnessed the warring of the elements on the dark summits of their mountains, and sat, unfriended and alone, on the wide heath, watching the slow sailing of the mists, or listening for the rising blast.

But I must not wander out of my own element into the Highland elements, or into those of the Ossianic poetry. I would only remark yet, that although this poetry is not merely descriptive, and that its moral sentiments, situations, and images, ought, it might be said, to make their full impression alike on all, this cannot, in the first place, be true where the language is not understood; because even these are deeply implicated with the ideas of natural objects: while no mixed poetry can, under any circumstances, bear to be stripped of its physical portion (to use the dry language of science), or even to have the effect of that diminished, without suffering essentially in that which belongs to its moral part.

Passing, however, from what relates to the merits of this Poetry, I shall confine myself to a few of those collateral matters which are yet subjects of controversy, and which still admit of some illustration; on which opinions may now be adventured without much hazard of exciting any anger but such as may be fairly neglected. This will be found to belong to those who cannot even speak

on the subject of their country without wrath, nor hear it mentioned without suspicion of meditated injury; who refuse to listen to historical doubts and enquiries in which the whole world is equally concerned, lest they should be robbed of imaginary rights and virtues; and who, themselves, unacquainted with their own history or the rules of investigation, make up, by contradictory statements and fabulous and idle traditions, what they want in temper and argument. Truth was never yet supported by fiction nor discovered by anger.

For the sake of such persons as may yet doubt the mere authenticity of the Ossianic poetry, it is easier and better to refer to the work of our excellent friend Dr. Graham, than to enter into any detail of the facts and arguments which he and his predecessors in this enquiry have brought forward. I could add nothing to these, and I need not repeat them.

But it must be remembered, in exculpation of those who, like Dr. Johnson, believed in a forgery, that the original and chief sources of contest, were the pretended epic poems of Fingal and Temora, as given by Macpherson; nor was it, even then, ever denied that some portions of these were truly Celtic fragments. The fact has proved to be, with sufficient accuracy, just what he suspected. Nor is it now denied by the Gaelic critics, that Macpherson did finally attempt to pass for the author; or that, at least, he conducted himself respecting his collected materials in such a manner, as to evince some hopes that the credit of originality would at last settle on himself. When it is recollected also with what violence of temper and unjustifiable concealment of the materials or manuscripts, the very natural doubts of the world were received, when the enthusiasm which wished to place Ossian in an equal rank with Homer is remem-

bered, and when the outrageous historical theory that was built on the poems, and the peculiar æra assigned to them, are called to mind, we can really find excuses for those who did not thus submit to be taken by storm instead of convinced, and who could not receive a system which was at variance with all probability or possibility. Had this poetry been honestly brought before the public, by men like Dr. Smith and Dr. Graham, and more effectually than it was done in the earlier specimens by Stone, we should scarcely have heard of these doubts and disputes; and a question, which has now found its level, would have reached that, soon after the hour of its first proposition. It is the misfortune of violence on one side to produce it on the other, and the punishment of imposture in one thing, to be believed in nothing; and thus also we may perhaps go far to justify the little liberal and highly over-wrought objections of Mr. Laing.

The original dispute respecting the existence of ancient Gaelic manuscripts, or the use of letters in the Highlands, seems also to have been conducted, and that on both sides, with much less of temper and of mutual understanding of each other's opinions, than it demanded. If the parties would not understand each other, and would not examine coolly, a question which could be determined in no other manner, there seemed also to be, at times, very little desire, on either side, to confess or receive the truth. It was never pretended, even by Johnson, that this language had not long been a written one in Ireland: he was too well informed to have committed this error. When he denied that there were ancient Highland manuscripts, or that the Highland Celtic had been a literary language, it was asserted that he denied it of the Irish Celtic: and when he asked for Highland manuscripts afterwards, he was presented with Irish

ones, as Highland. Thus also, Iona was quoted against this class of sceptics, when it was notorious that this was an Irish establishment; and thus there were brought forward a translation of Galen, of the Schola Salernitana, and other books and manuscripts, which had been written in Ireland. Our friends in the Highlands have only themselves therefore to blame, if, producing bad testimony, it was not accepted; and it were well if we could think, that much was not done and said for the imaginary honour of Scotland, which had better have been omitted. The same may be remarked of the manuscripts of Avicenna, Averroes, Hippocrates, and others, asserted to have been in the possession of Beaton, a clergyman; which also were in the Irish character, and Irish productions. It is indeed said that the Irish character was formerly used in Mull. It is not proved that this was at an early period; but even then, it is most probable that this writing, such as it might have been, was derived from the connexion of Mull with Iona, and that the Highlands were indebted to the Irish for their writings, as they were to Irish Iona for their religion. To say that Iona was an university for general education and instruction, is a wild vision; as no general education was offered in the monasteries, which were, properly, intended for religious offices and monastic seclusion, and for the instruction and discipline of servants of the church and, occasionally, of apostolic missionaries; though in England, they, at one time, educated a few of the younger persons of great families, under protection of the knights and greater barons. Had such at least been one of the objects of Iona, it would have appeared in the lives of Columba and Columbanus: and it is by such random assertions as this, that disrepute is brought upon what little there is of certain in Highland antiquities.

If the Highlanders had written at an early period, they must have written in the Irish character; as, from no other source could they have received the letters which belonged to their language, or any letters. They were an Irish people, in fact, in a great measure; or at least the two were a common people. It is an oversight therefore to suppose that they could have possessed early manuscripts in any other character, whatever more recent ones they may have possessed in the Roman, derived from education in the Lowlands. But this argument, I must remark, might, to a certain extent, be turned in their favour; as it would, if unaided, disable us from pronouncing that any Highland manuscript was exclusively Irish. The great question here, however, hangs on possession; and as they have produced none of an ancient date, it must be concluded against them, and allowed that they did not cultivate letters at a remote period. The Lismore manuscripts are of 1512 to 1527. Others are dated in 1603, 1654, and 1690. Of one dated in 1238, it is acknowledged that this may be a spurious date, as it is only marked on the cover. If, as Mr. Astle thought, the Mackenzie manuscripts belong to the ninth or tenth centuries, it still remains to be proved that these, like many more, were not Irish, and written in Ireland.

There can, on the other hand, be no doubt that the Irish, not only possessed the use of letters from a remote period, but continued to cultivate them, in spite of the oppressions and injuries they experienced from the Norwegian conquests. The oldest authorities in Irish manuscripts, are said, by their antiquaries, to belong to the ninth century; and for Scotland altogether, the most ancient written record was the act of Malcolm Canmore, far later; (1057). But the mere establishment of Iona

is a sufficient proof of the superior and still higher antiquity of Irish literature. The settlement of Columba admits of no dispute: its literary knowledge admits of none; and no one denies that he brought religion and literature alike, such as the latter might have been, into an uncivilized country. It is another question how it happened, that of two branches of the same people, the one should have been in a state of barbarism and ignorance while the other was cultivated; but it cannot admit of a dispute that the Irish Celts possessed literature and comparative civilization, when the Highland branch was in a state of rudeness and ignorance. Hence it is that the Highlands could not be expected to possess early manuscripts; having no early monastic establishments, except Iona, in which alone letters could have been preserved, and having indeed, for a long period, none other than that for which they were indebted to Ireland.

Not only therefore was the Gaelic or Highland Celtic not an early written language, but it is impossible that it should have been so. It is an additional proof of the debt of the Highlands to Ireland in this respect, that in Carswell's Testament, printed in 1567, and in the Gaelic Psalms, printed in 1664, the Irish orthography was used, and that this orthography was copied, even till after the year 1750; when the Gaelic critics undertook to approximate it to their own dialect of the language. Thus to borrow an inconvenient or unsuitable orthography from another dialect, is in itself a proof that they had not cultivated their own, and that the art of writing had been neglected. Had they possessed a literature themselves, independently of Ireland, their scholars or writers must have done formerly, what their posterity is doing now, and there would have been a Gaelic as there is an Irish

orthography. But writing arose among them, with the adoption of the Roman alphabet; from which, being able to borrow but letters, the Gaelic was obliged to have recourse to Ireland for the orthography, or the written language.

It is yet a subject of enquiry, however, why the Irish should thus have possessed this superiority. To suppose that the Highlands were as barbarous and illiterate at all periods before the settlement of Columba as they were then found, is to suppose what cannot easily be admitted. I have said elsewhere at more length, that I consider this to have been an age of rudeness, posterior to one of previous civilization, in which both portions of the Scots, Irish and Scottish, partook alike: a dark or middle age, the effect of conquests, from which even Ireland was not perhaps totally exempt. The Colbertine M.S. indeed, says that the Picts did settle and reign in that country. The Celts of Scotland had certainly suffered from the Pictish invasions; and these seem to have been even more ferocious in their character than those of the Scandinavians. It is probable that they had thus the effect of overturning and extirpating the early Highland, or Celtic, literature and civilization; leaving little other traces of it than the music and the poetry; while Ireland, comparatively exempt from these attacks, only suffered afterwards, in common with the Highlands, from the descents of the Northmen. But I have speculated elsewhere sufficiently on the probable early civilization of the Scoto-Celts, to render any further remarks on that subject unnecessary at present.

This naturally leads to the next great dispute respecting the Ossianic poetry, still unsettled; namely, whether it is the property of Ireland or of Scotland. That

this also should have been a source of anger, as well as of contention, is no marvel; but there are two parties, each our countrymen, equally entitled to impartial justice.

It is one of the difficulties which intermingles itself with many parts of the Ossianic enquiry, to determine whether these poems are the works of one individual: rejecting such parts as are acknowledged to have been added by Macpherson. Nor is it free of similar ones, arising out of variations and additions from other sources, both in Ireland and the Highlands, in the progress of transmission. Gaelic critics reject, of course, all those peculiarities which mark their Irish claims; as Macpherson, especially, did every thing also that threw doubts on their high antiquity. But the Irish cannot, of course, concede that point; nor, where Gaelic criticism produces nothing but assertions accusing the Irish of interpolation, can an impartial spectator yield his judgment to them. Ireland retorts the charge of excision: this nation is at least equally ancient, and equally learned, and equally honourable; so that, on these grounds, the claims are plainly equal, to say no more. The greater wrath having however been displayed in our own country, the Clown in the tale would have given judgment in favour of Ireland.

There seems to be no remedy in the mean while; unless we were to admit that whatever any critic, Irish or Gaelic, chooses to determine to be a work of Ossian, as that of one man and one age, is so: however probable it may be that some of the poems are the produce of other hands, and that they were composed at different periods. But if Greek critics are even yet undetermined whether the Iliad and the Odyssey were both the works of Homer, or what parts of the Iliad are interpolated, far less can we repose in the decisions of Celtic critics on such a subject,

where the poetry is of so simple and uniform a character, where, as has been proved, it is so easily imitated, and when themselves cannot agree.

Admitting much more to the Highlanders on the subject of the geography of the poems, than will be or has been conceded by unbiassed critics, the Irish have equal claims at least, to the locality, derived from similar sources; from their own traditions, and from the introduction of images, and of characters, in the person of St. Patrick and others, which are peculiarly Irish. Tradition or possession may be admitted to be of equal weight for both countries; for in both, they exist or existed alike, at least at one period. But rather, say the Irish, they were current and common in Ireland when they were little known in the Highlands; and the number of the relics or poems preserved in our country, are so much greater, that, not only have the Highlanders been obliged to have recourse to us for various and for better editions, but we have preserved many which they had lost or never possessed, and which they were obliged to borrow from us.

On the subject of interpolation, or falsification, I must also remark, that while Macpherson sedulously extirpated every thing that could fix their Irish locality, Miss Brooke's poems, supposed to have belonged to the eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries, were peculiarly accused of corruption; because of their presenting manners more modern than Macpherson's theory chose to admit, with allusions to the Christian religion and to Christian priests, and with tales of magic and chivalry and extravagance, supposed to be unworthy of, or unknown to, the assumed Ossian. Yet the work of the Mac Callums, very recently edited, (1816,) an unworthy enough collection of poems, is of a similar stamp; containing, especially, dialogues of Saints with Ossian, precisely as in the Irish poems which

have been so much criticised. It has been thought proper to overlook this important fact, and the much more important one, that these ignorant editors, literally mere scavengers in book-making, collected all these tales in the Highlands, from the recitation of natives. I fear that this fact will go far to prove, in itself, the Irish source of the whole.

It is another argument in favour of the Irish antiquaries, that the Feinne, or Fions, are mentioned by all ancient writers, as an Irish body of soldiers, or "militia:" and though they have thought fit to make their own cause somewhat ridiculous, by supposing the Feinne to have been a Phenician colony, that does not vitiate their evidence as to the possession of these Fions. It is here also especially worthy of remark, that Martin, a native of Sky himself, and a Highland author and antiquary, reports Fin Mac Coul, who is Fingal, to have been a general of Irish militia, who came from Spain to Ireland, and arrived in the Isles in the reign of King Ewen. This is Highland testimony in favour of Ireland, at a period when the poems had attracted no notice, (for he does not even mention Ossian,) and when, of course, it was not supposed that any honour was to be derived from setting up a counter-claim. In fact, these poems, long known to Ireland, were not publicly heard of in Scotland till at a late period; being quite unknown to the literary men of its middle age.

The mention of the harp in the Ossianic poems, may alike be supposed to strengthen the Irish claims; since that instrument was the peculiarly national one of Ireland, while it was little known in the Highlands: but, on that point, I have said all that was necessary when on the subject of Highland Music. An analogous argument is derived from the use and mention of chariots. That

the present Morven, which we have just left, was the Morven of Ossian, need not be supposed: but it is impossible to fix on any place in the Highlands, bating such few trivial exceptions as it is unnecessary to mention, where any machine with wheels, of any construction, drawn by horses, could have been used; whereas, in Ireland, that could not have been attended with any difficulty; even putting out of the question the more perfect civilization of that country at this remote period. It must be remembered however, on the other hand, that chariots were employed at the battle of the Grampians, so that they were not unknown in Scotland. But if these were used by Fingal, or by the personages of these poems or of this supposed dynasty, it will become necessary to alter their geography, and, with that, to surrender much more than the Highland antiquaries would be willing to grant. An action fought with chariots must have been fought on a plain; and from historical testimony also, that plain was in the Lowlands; whether at Stonehaven or not, is at present of no great moment. To conceive that these chariots belonged to a military people residing on the west coast of the Highlands, as the Highland geography of the poems presumes, would be to suppose, at that remote period, an organized army with a regular system of artillery and commissaries, possessing an arsenal in the low country; as they could not have brought their chariots with them to Stonehaven; or to Comrie, were even that the place. It does not follow, therefore, from the existence of chariots in Scotland, that they must have been known to Highland heroes, though they might have been used by Irish Fions. Nor, when Adamnan mentions the travelling of St. Columba for a whole day without a linch-pin, as a miracle, (a circumstance noticed in speaking of Highland military weapons,) oes it follow that this was in the High-

lands. If it was not in Ireland, it must have been in the low country, and in the Pictish dominions. In Iona, he could not have thus travelled half an hour; nor is there any part of the Highlands where such a feat could have been performed, unless they had then possessed roads of which no trace or evidence remains. The imaginary Parallel roads have been disposed of elsewhere.

The superior literary claims of Ireland, already noticed, are not admitted as an argument of much moment in their favour, when it is considered that the poems were preserved by tradition: and whatever others may therefore think of the value of this argument, the Highlanders may be allowed to make the most of it. Nor need I at present state any others; such as yet remain, being entangled in the question which relates to their æra, or antiquity.

It does not appear that any comparison of evidence, whether direct or circumstantial, can establish this æra; while it is likely that the very different dates of poems, all equally ascribed to Oisin, as he is called in Ireland, have introduced additional confusion into this part of the question. That one great poet should have monopolized the fame of many more, is neither surprising nor new. This question has been also further perplexed by the theory of Macpherson; which, involving such a system of chronology, and presenting such anachronisms in dates, names, and manners, as it does, has, I presume, been abandoned by every one. Nor has a little confusion been produced by those visionaries who make Fingal a Scottish king; and who have chosen to intermix him and his heroes, on account of their brilliant qualities, with the rest of the fables which they have received from the manufactory of the Boethian school. Whatever be the merits of this part of the question, this addition to the

fabulous history of Scotland has not even the claim of antiquity, as we shall presently see. It is rather provoking, that on a question so truly interesting as is that of Celtic poetry, and of this poet in particular, the natural obscurity of the subject, already unmanageable enough, should have been augmented by such a combination of fiction and forgery and irritation and ignorance. Had it been left to a jury of two or four cool and sensible men, de medietate linguæ, such as Dr. Graham and Dr. Matthew Young, for example, all that could have been known and all that was really worth knowing or believing, would have been determined at the very commencement.

We might almost suppose that an ancient English antiquary had looked at this very question with a prophetic anticipation, when he makes the following remark. "Being not very prodigal of my historical faith"— "and indeed my jealousy hath oft vext me with particular inquisition of whatever occurs, bearing not a mark of most apparent truth, ever since I found so intolerable antichronisms, incredible reports, and bardish impostures, as well from ignorance as assumed liberty of invention in some of our ancients, and read also such palpable falsities of our nation thrust into the world by later time. For my part, I believe as much in them as I do of finding King Hiero's mast in our mountains." But the complaint is an old one; and may be applied to many more cases than this.

If I were to speak from my own internal conviction, as it is commonly called, and of which the true name is, sometimes, prejudice, and at others, hypothesis, so far from considering these poems modern, I should choose a higher antiquity for them than even that which is commonly assigned: I mean the eleventh or twelfth cen-

turies. So far however from meaning to include the whole in this opinion, I do not, of course, suppose, that any one of a very high antiquity can be positively fixed on. Nor is it my design to say that I believe Ossian to be the sole author, nor to suppose that this person is of a more remote antiquity than Macpherson assigned for him; but merely to suggest it as probable, that the Celts possessed poetry from an age which is lost in antiquity, and that it is far from improbable that some of these poems, or of their fragments, be the author's name known or not, are of an extremely remote age. But to business.

The authenticity of the Irish editions being admitted, the date, for some of these poems at least, might be supposed to be as early as the time of St. Patrick, because he is introduced into them in dialogue with Ossian; and at later periods after the introduction of Christianity, on account of other notices of Christian anchorites. This would give an extreme antiquity of 417, instead of Macpherson's date; but that presumes, not only that St. Patrick was considered in them as a living, and not a historical, personage; but that these editions are genuine and ancient. But it is said, that, in Ireland, there is a copy of a poem respecting Conan, referring also to the place of his interment, and that the very stone, with the corresponding inscription, was determined. The age of this has not, however, been fixed. Some antiquaries speak of the second century, others of the fourth or fifth: and Walker decides that all the poems relating to Fin, were produced by bards in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. But O'Halloran goes much further; for he fixes the date of the lamentation of Cuchullin over his son Conloch at 764 A. C.; giving a total range to this poetry of not less than twenty centuries, if all Irish dates

are to be received. Such are the vacillations of opinion. But if this monument were genuine in every sense, it would be worth all the Scottish imaginary tombs, and would fix, without dispute, the right to the poems. I need not say that it is disputed.

Of the Irish chronology I need say nothing; but I do not see on what just ground we are to reject the Irish editions and receive only the Highland ones; while it is certain that they experienced this treatment by Macpherson, because he had a system of his own to support, which that admission would have overturned, and which he supported, without scruple, in any manner that he thought effective. The value of his support is determined at once, by his confounding Caracul and Caracalla, or deriving the one name from the other, when this Emperor, as Gibbon properly remarks, was called Antoninus during the Scottish wars, and did not acquire that name till after he had quitted Britain for ever. This is one of the misfortunes into which fiction plunges itself, when united to ignorance; and thus scholars of similar calibre have fallen into those blunders and anachronisms which gave so much disturbance to the antiquary whom I have just quoted. But on the subject of the Irish dates, I may yet remark, that in as far as these poems touch on the Scandinavians and their invasions, they cannot reach higher than the ninth century; and the same rule would hold good if they were Highland compositions.

Thus much for dates, as connected with Ireland chiefly. In Scotland, nothing like a date for the existence of Ossian can be discovered; as no one will now pin his faith on the resemblance in sound between Caros and Carausius, more than in that of Caracul and Caracalla; and as all the rest of the arguments used for the purpose of fixing a point, are equally feeble. A minimum

period is however ascertained, as it is thought, by the testimony of Barbour, who mentions Fingal in 1375, the date of the Archdeacon's poem, and by that of Giraldus Cambrensis, who wrote in the twelfth century. The former of these, however, applies alike to Ireland: the latter, almost exclusively. It is not necessary to prove that the poems and the name of Ossian had been known there; as they are probably much more ancient, and as it is now fully understood that they are not a modern forgery: but this proves nothing in favour of the Scottish right to them. It has been said that they could not even have been known in the Highlands, till recently; as they are not mentioned by Monro nor Fordun, nor, as I just mentioned, by Martin, nor many others. They are not even noticed by Birt, who wrote some years after Martin. It is impossible however to concede that. Assuredly they were not brought from Ireland, even by Stone or Smith; nor, immediately before the time of Macpherson, by any one; and that they were popularly known in the Highlands when collected there, is equally proved. Granting therefore that they are Irish, they must have been borrowed from that country when the communication between the two coasts was that of a people which, on both sides, possessed dominion, and chiefs, or kings, in common: and thus their existence in the Highlands is removed to a period at least prior to the battle of Largs. All that can be fairly concluded from this silence, therefore, is, that their value had not then been understood, or that they had attracted no particular notice, even among the people themselves. Buchanan's testimony, also quoted on this point, though worthless on such matters, only proves that the Feinne were what the Irish call them, an Irish military, or militia, as the term has been. Lesley also mentions Fingal, or Fin Mac Cuil,

in the same manner, as do Hector Boethius and Nicolson; and he calls him a giant of prodigious stature in the days of Ewen the second: all tending to prove nothing more than that these reports were of Irish extraction: and all equally omitting any notice of the poems in question.

It is in 1520, that Boece mentions Fingal and his acts. Nicolson speaks of an old romance of the famous acts of Fyn Mac Cowl, who was, as Lesley calls him, a giant in the days of Ewen II. If we could make that the Pictish King Uuen, the son of Ungus, his date is 836; as there is no such person as a King Ewen in 430; though one of Buchanan's forty kings. But that is of no moment: nor does Nicolson profess to believe, any more than Boece, from whom he quotes. This last date would make Fingal nearly contemporary with St. Patrick, putting the giant out of the question. In 1566, Good, an Irish school-master, sent to Camden an account of Fin Mac Huyle and Osker Mac Oshin, as two fabulous persons. How he was considered formerly, a quotation from the ancient Scottish poet will show: and there is no hint, here at least, of any poetry, nor of aught else than of a hero of romance, who seems even to have been held in ridicule.

My foir grandsyr, hecht Fyn Mackowll,
That dang the devill and gart him yowll,—
He gatt my gudsyr Gog Magog—
My fader, mekle Gow Macmorne
Owt of his moderis wame was schorne—
Or he of aige was yeiris thré
He wald stop over the Occraine sie
The hevins had him of feir.

Barbour, indeed, declares his contempt for the Ossianic characters, or the Fingalian dynasty as it is called, openly, when he calls that an unworthy comparison which

Macdougall made of Bruce to Gow Makmorne, at the battle of Dalry in Glen Dochart.

It is idle to bring forward the names of caverns, and tombs, and other localities, as proofs, either of the antiquity or of the Scottish parentage of Fingal and Ossian. It cannot be ascertained that any such denominations are ancient; and, as an example of the reverse, we know that the cave in Staffa received this name in our own day for the first time. I made a similar remark formerly on the imaginary tomb in Glen Almond, and, lately, on Arran. This is natural. In every country, there is some hero who is the general referee on all such occasions; Arthur or Fingal, it is indifferent which. Edward burnt all records, Cromwell destroyed all ecclesiastical memorials, Hercules vanquished all wild beasts, Confucius is the author of all Chinese morality, St. Paul left his mark on all rocks, and Joe Miller is the father of all wit. Though these traditions respecting the Scottish Fingal were not involved in many other impossibilities, they contradict each other; since there are as many tombs that claim the bodies of some of these heroes, as there are cities contesting for the birth of Homer. Bayle has well said, that "La crédulité est une mere que sa propre fécondité étouffe tôt ou tard."

Nor is there the slightest reason for admitting that Fingal was of the race of the ancient Scottish kings, obscure as these may be; even were his Irish parentage not admitted. Those to whose fraternity he has been generally referred, are purely fabulous. So far from that, he could not even have been a reputed hero, in former times, in the Highlands; and this silence respecting him and his race, is one of the strongest arguments against the general knowledge and popularity of the poems at such a period; if not against their very existence, as it

has been thought. If etymology could prove any thing, and that he is a real personage, he ought to be a Dane, or an Ostman: because the Irish, in distinguishing their invaders, called the fairhaired ones Fin gael, and the dark ones Dhu gael.

I have elsewhere shown that most of the great families of the Highlands claim very remote genealogies; and it is well known that the recitation and the supposed preservation of these, were a principal part of the office of the Bards. Were all these genealogies real, we might have expected that some one would have produced a descent from Fingal, or Cuchullin, or Trenmor, or Carril; whereas they are never named. Still more should this be the case if the genealogies were fictitious; as we are quite sure that many of them must have been, and as I have particularly shown to be the case with the O Dhuin origin of Macdonald. Had the Heralds in question known of these heroes, they would not have been long in deriving, each one his patron, from Fingal or Oscar or Ossian. We can only conclude that the Bard genealogists of those days had never heard of these persons; and as the Irish do pretend to such descents, it is an additional argument in favour of the Irish origin of the poems. To say nothing of the folly of attempting to erect a historical system, and a Fingalian dynasty of kings, on some vague and modern traditions and inventions, united to some poetry of doubtful place, and date, and purity, and to names, of which what little is really known is averse to such a system, or to any system, there is no mention of these Fingalian kings, Trathal, Trenmor, and Fingal, in the real, and as little in the fabulous, history of the Scottish early kings. That they should be wanting, even in the latter list, is a peculiarly deadly argument against the Highland claims. To say no more on this than is

strictly necessary, the oration on the genealogy of the Scottish kings was pronounced in the thirteenth century (1249), by order of Alexander the third, before the three estates of Scotland; and while it is said by Innes to have been accurate, it does not mention Fingal. The same fact is noticed by Major, and in the continuation of Fordun's History. I think we may safely dismiss this much of the Ossianic controversy.

As I am desirous of discovering a high antiquity for these poems, it is especially proper that I should state all the objections; that it may be seen whether they are all really insuperable. Others of the collateral points at issue, happen to be so much involved in this part of the question, that, to avoid repetition, I will not notice them separately, but suffer them to enter as they may, and make their own impression; as I am not writing a treatise on Ossian, but only adding to the arguments, such as they may be, that have been already adduced on various points, and putting the ancient ones in a new light.

I ought first, however, to state the reasons why it is probable, that though any one individual of the poems in question cannot be proved ancient, the Scoto-Irish Celts might have possessed a poetry, even more ancient than the highest date yet assigned to these; and that even some of them might be supposed to contain, perhaps, images and passages, or at least a tone of feeling and a style of imagery derived from those ancient poems; if we should not adopt the much more difficult supposition, that such an ancient poetry had been corrupted at various times by additions and alterations, and by the substitution of more modern names, so as to be what it now is; as has been the case within our own knowledge. These are events not unlikely to have happened in poetry preserved by recitation, passing through a variety of hands, and

those, in latter times at least, decidedly barbarous. The general argument in support of this opinion, is the same which I have used elsewhere, as to the music of the Highlands and the probable knowledge of arts and literature among the Western Celts, at a period prior to that state which is admitted to have been a barbarous one, and which followed the Gothic invasions. The cultivation of a music which is, if not a very refined one according to the modern system, an extremely meritorious one exclusively of that, almost necessarily implies the existence and cultivation of a poetry. Critics, indeed, on these arts, in whatever age or nation existing, have invariably united the two; so that, on this point, all the world is agreed, without the suspicion of a bias in favour of the Celts. Nor, if my view of the high antiquity of the ancient Irish and Highland music be correct, have we, either, any reason to doubt that it was fully equal in merit, if not superior, to that of the Greeks; to say nothing of the Romans, who appear never to have had any arts of their own. We cannot, it is true, measure the merit of the poetry by that of the music; but this subject and this connexion are worthy of the attention of antiquaries; and since it is now for the first time brought forward, as is the fashion for system-mongers to say, I will prefer silence to further discussion: allowing it to make what head it may, without pursuing it, like Mr. Shandy, till the audience nods; wearying and dazzling myself and others with many words. I will only add further, that all the ancient authorities allow that the Etruscans cultivated, notedly and successfully, poetry and music, that Etruria was a Celtic nation, and that the Western, or Scoto-Irish Celts, having elsewhere been proved to have had an original music of oriental origin, and derived from the common source whence Etruria also derived its birth,

its language, its mythology, and probably its art, it cannot be considered improbable that they preserved and cultivated both of these inseparable and sister arts. The argument applies equally to Wales; and the remote date of Welsh poetry confirms the same view. It is to the sixth century that the Welsh refer the splendid age of their poetry; maintaining also, of course, that it had been cultivated from time immemorial. Pinkerton, always forgetting who the Celts originally were, and how many powerful and refined nations they produced, denies this, as might be expected; and fixes on the fifteenth century as the date of the oldest Welsh poetry. In this, his anger has blinded him to some of the most obvious rules of criticism. He, like every one else, admits that Celtic poetry has a marked and peculiar character, and he ought to point out how that should have been generated when the nation was fast losing all its peculiarities. It was not copied, assuredly, from any known poetry, English or foreign. Unquestionably, I shall be considered as one of the most outrageous of the outrageous Celts and defenders of the Ossianic antiquity, since, as you see, I leave even Macphërson far behind: but, like others of the Shandean breed, I am no more given to be laughed out of my hypothesis by an English critic, than I am to be frightened, by the dirk of a Gael, out of my opinion that Fingal was not a Scottish king and did not make the Parallel roads.

Of the objections to the antiquity of these poems, meant to apply to Macpherson's hypothesis, and to mine as it shall happen, the first which I may notice is that of Adelung. The Irish early manuscripts, even down as late as the thirteenth century, are now scarcely legible by the best Erse scholars. Now the language of the poems is modern. The answer to this seems extremely

simple. Having been preserved by recitation, not in manuscript, the language of the poems necessarily kept pace with the language of conversation; thus undergoing an imperceptible and gradual change. We may ask ourselves what the language of Gower or Chaucer would now have been, had their poetry been preserved only in the same manner. It is still easy to suppose that much obsolete phraseology, or many obsolete words, might have been preserved; and this is said to be the fact. Thus also, variations are easily accounted for; whether between the Irish and Scottish editions, or between any two in one country. As to the objection that these poems could not have been preserved so long by tradition, it appears to have been abandoned; and if not, it is scarcely deserving of a reply. The history of the Homeric fragments is familiar; and the trade of the Bards, and the habits and secluded state of the Scoto-Irish Celts to a late period, seem to leave no difficulties on this subject. The task of Stone or Smith was not greater than that of Pisistratus: taking it for granted that this received opinion is true. But to what a length of time even history may be preserved by tradition, seems better proved by that of Garcilasso de la Vega, himself an Inca; since that history seems to have been transmitted, with considerable detail and accuracy, for a period of some centuries, by means of little more than a notation of dates, and without a written language. It seems, however, quite superfluous to repel this objection.

The mention of Scandinavian invasions, already noticed, adduced as conclusive against Macpherson, who fixes his date in the third century when these did not commence till the eighth or ninth, would only prove a recent date for some particular poems or passages, but is not conclusive against the whole. And it has been, per-

haps, one chief misfortune attending their claims to antiquity, that so many poems should have been attributed to one man, and he a Scottish instead of an Irish Scot; and that so many additions and interpolations should have been made, for the purpose of fixing a particular date. In this way do theory and vanity and fraud and bad faith defeat their own objects. Thus, as Laing has observed, Swaran is a fictitious Haco, and Carthula is Macpherson's copy of Ketil. Whether, in these particular criticisms and others, he is correct or not, I need not enquire, as that would lead into a wide field; but the general remark is, nevertheless, but too true.

Many other charges of this nature, made by the same author to the same end, carry some real, and some only apparent, weight with them: as to the antiquity, I mean, not to the absolute forgery; as, on that point, he is plainly wrong. I cannot pretend to go through the whole of this matter: but may notice a few of the most important points which bear on the general question of an unknown antiquity, or which possess any other kind of interest. On this question also, it will appear that Macpherson has injured his own and every one's cause, by a variety of contrivances in the way of omission and modification; all calculated for his own particular hypothesis.

Among other things, the state of manners, of moral feeling I should perhaps say, represented in the poems, has been very naturally a subject of remonstrance. Though it has been said by Dion Cassius, as I have remarked on another occasion, that the Irish were savages and cannibals, ignorant of agriculture, and, by St. Jerom, that the Strath-Cluyd people also were cannibals, it is impossible to credit these reports; which have been made of all unknown nations, at all times, whether they were true or not; and very often, as we know, falsely.

We might fairly ask whence the historian obtained his information; and we have only to examine Greek and Roman history, to see with what carelessness, to call it by no harder a term, even the most modern and celebrated of these writers repeated, as facts, the grossest fictions. I need scarcely name Livy, with his tales and prodigies. As to St. Jerom, he merely saw some Scots at Paris when he was a boy; and some one told him that they came from a nation of cannibals. The Londoners believed not much less of the Highlanders in 1745. If the early Scoto-Celts had music and letters, (and that they had these at least, is certain,) they could not easily have been ignorant of agriculture, nor could they have been cannibals: but this assertion is not worth a second thought; while the reverse can be proved, as I shall hereafter have occasion to show. On the other hand, it was evidently part of Macpherson's system to make his Fingal, and his other heroes, a Jonathan, a Hector, a Bayard, a Don Quixote, and an Uncle Toby; pressing into his service all the patterns of a true gentleman which history and fiction have recorded and invented.

There has palpably been much exaggeration on this point. Yet we know not what the manners of the ancient Celts were; and though the poems should even not be extremely ancient, we can still conceive the ancient tone of manners to have been preserved in the character of the poetry. But it is not at all unreasonable to suppose that they were a mild people; as is proved by their having been always beaten; while their attachment to music and poetry would tend to strengthen the same conclusion. It has been urged as a particular objection, under this head, that the females are treated in the poems with a degree of consideration unknown to barbarous nations. Now it is here, in the first place, assumed, that the early

Celts were barbarous; while it is equally assumed and untrue, that all nations in this state of rudeness inaltreat their females. It is quite remarkable, on the other hand, that the treatment of females in the Homeric age, was far more liberal and amiable than even in the period of Greek splendour; nor could those who made this objection have read Tacitus, who notes, particularly, the consideration which the Germans had for their women. If that was the case with a people so ferocious as these warlike Goths, it is by no means improbable as to the Celts; nor would a British Queen have been suffered to command a people, if the female character had not been held in high estimation among the Celts of this division.

It was the same among the Scandinavians; and they were assuredly ferocious enough in their earlier days. The ferocity of Regner hairy-breeches, Lodbrog, is familiar, from the often quoted poem narrating his death; and we know that these sentiments were those of his age. Yet he was refused in marriage by Aslanga, a shepherdess only, until he should return victorious; and, to her behests he conformed without remonstrance. Du Guesclin, or the Knight of Smoke, would have done precisely the same. These are the feelings of chivalry itself; and this fact proves that the chivalrous attention to the fair, displayed in the Ossianic poems, is not necessarily a modern forgery. It may possibly prove that there is a Scandinavian tone in the poems; but we have no right to assume that the Celts, as a milder people, did not entertain similar sentiments. There are other causes than mere barbarism which lead to the neglect of females. But these are out of my way at present. You see that, on this point, I have defended Macpherson better than he did himself. With all his crimes, we must never forget that we are deeply his debtors.

When Macpherson boasts that the poems contain no lions, or foreign animals, as a proof that they are at least original and not borrowed, he betrays an unlucky ignorance of natural history; unaware, or forgetting, that many other animals, now unknown, except by their remains or by tradition, had, in ancient times, existed in Scotland. Thus we formerly possessed the bear, the boar, the beaver, the wolf, the urus, and the elk. That none of these should be mentioned, might be adduced as a proof against any degree of antiquity whatever; as it actually has been brought forward in proof of modern forgery, by Laing and Pinkerton and others. But, against other evidence, this single argument is not conclusive; when no animal, not even the horse or the stag, is here used as a necessary ingredient of poetical composition; so that the question will remain much the same, as to all disputes respecting the antiquity; whether that is to be referred to the third century, or to one much higher, or much lower. It might be another question, how far this affected the claims of these poems on Ireland in preference to Scotland. Writing without book (in more senses than one you will perhaps think), I cannot now recollect whether Laing has proved that Macpherson suppressed the names of animals for the purpose of giving plausibility to his argument on this subject; but I recollect a charge for thus suppressing the name of the aspen, as he had supposed it a naturalized tree, whereas it is a common native. Thus has it been the fate of these unlucky poems, to suffer more from friends than enemies. Pinkerton also uses some arguments on this subject, derived from weapons: but they amount to nothing.

Unable to collate the Gaelic with the English, I know not whether it is true, as some have said, that there is no allusion to agriculture and to sheep in the originals.

Even if that should be the fact, it does not appear how this can prove any thing respecting any theory. If there is any truth in my own, the opinion of these persons, as it regards the state of the Celts who produced this poetry, is wrong; and they have therefore, on this and on other subjects, mistaken some things and misrepresented others, from ignorance of the history of the period which they pretend to describe. Laing's fancy, as it has been that of others, was, that the Scoto-Celts, at the age described, were a nation of mere hunters; which is impossible, if what I suggested this moment about their ancient state is true; and the high improbability of which is further proved, by the fact that the Teutonic nations which conquered them, were acquainted with agriculture, as were the Britons, or Cimbric Celts, at least three centuries before his imaginary æra. All therefore which follows from the omission of allusions to agriculture in the Ossianic poems, if that be a fact, is, that the poet found nothing fit for his purpose in those images. The assumed necessity that he should have ransacked all art and all nature, appears to have arisen from idly taking Homer as a standard of comparison; to say nothing of the supposed rivalry of the Celtic poet.

If the frequent allusions to drinking, and to the symposiums of Fingal and his friends, whether in the clouds above or the fogs below, are genuine parts of the originals, and also a necessary part of the character of the poetry, they would almost determine its æra, as far as these particular poems at least are implicated, to be posterior to the Gothic invasions, though they would be insufficient to prove the poetry itself to be Scandinavian. If added by Macpherson, they are only further proofs of his having confounded the Celts and the Goths, as he has plainly done in other instances; misled by Pelloutier and

Mallet, or, as is more probable, by their copyist, his namesake Dr. Macpherson. It is admitted by antiquaries, that the former were a sober, as well as a mild, people; while the Gothic nations, by the testimony of all ancient historians, were extremely addicted to drinking. No other proof, indeed, of their having considered it the chief joy of life, next to war, is required, than that the whole occupation of Valhalla was to fight all day and drink all night; the convenient goat yielding mead instead of milk, while the boar Scrimmer furnished a fund of inexhaustible bacon. There is something in the occasionally high military tone of this poetry also, which savours much of a Gothic origin. Whatever difficulty there may be in reconciling this and many other matters to my theory, or to any theory of an antiquity prior to the Gothic invasions, it would equally tend to prove that this was Gothic and not Celtic poetry; which is a supposition discordant with a much greater mass of evidence on the other side.

This leads to the question of the mythology, or the religion, of the Ossianic poems; which is one of the great stumbling blocks, and on which Macpherson has been strongly accused of literary malversation. It must be admitted that every thing was rejected from the poems which could in any way refer to Christianity; because that not only tended to establish the Irish claims, but to reduce the æra to a later one than suited his views. Altered as the poems have been, even in Ireland, I presume that it is now impossible to know what the original mythological allusions were, or whether there were any. That many have been altered, if not supplied in Ireland in no distant times, is plain enough from the rules of ordinary criticism; as there are vulgarities and inconsistences in some poems, and in parts of others, which

are absolutely incompatible with the leading tone of the better ones, or with the general character. Whoever introduced that which is palpably northern or Scandinavian mythology, whether this was Macpherson's work or not, must have been strangely thoughtless, both as to the æra which was to be maintained, and as to the admitted religion of the Celtic nations. Were the mythology of all the poems truly Scandinavian, there would be little doubt that the æra was comparatively modern; that is, not reaching beyond the eighth or ninth centuries. But in that case also, it would be necessary to consider them as, in a great degree, if not entirely, Scandinavian poems; a supposition, as I have just remarked, incompatible with their general character. It is said that Macpherson dropped all the proper mythology, of whatever nature, which he did find; either retaining, or adding, the mere ghostology, which being of a neutral character, might escape all dangerous criticism. Owing to the disappearance of his original collection, I imagine that even Gaelic scholars find it now difficult to know what was the real state of many of the poems in the Highlands, although in possession of authentic copies of some; but I have neither time nor space for minute and detailed criticism of this nature.

Such however are some more of the difficulties which are produced, chiefly by the uncertain purity of these poems; and which are not likely to be satisfactorily cleared away. But I may remark that the genuine existence of a pure Scandinavian mythology in them, is improbable on any grounds. If they are prior to the introduction of Christianity into Ireland, and if the Christian allusions are spurious, the mythology, if any, must have appertained to the Celtic nation, and must have been derived from what is called Druidism. On those terms, it could not have been Scandinavian, be-

cause that race was then unknown to Ireland and Scotland alike. Nor is it intelligible how the mythology should have been Scandinavian at any date. The Norwegians were converted by St. Columba's followers, by missions to that country, before they were known as invaders in Ireland and Scotland; and even when they landed in Shetland and Orkney, they found Christian priests in those islands. It seems to me therefore that there is nothing left for us but to reject this mythology from the poems altogether; because Ossian, be he one person or more, must have been either a Celt and a follower of the Druidical religion, or a Celt converted to Christianity, or a Christian Northman. He could in no case have been a worshipper of Odin. Either of the former classes of allusion is possible, but not the last; unless, what is a very improbable supposition, he had adopted a foreign and poetical mythology, as our poets have chosen to deal in Venuses and Cupids. The cases are far too dissimilar to admit of such an explanation. It is plain that those who argue as Laing does, respecting the forgery of the poems, might say that these circumstances would prove their position; as others, assuming the Christian allusions to be genuine, would thus prove their recent date. The latter is possible, but the former must be abandoned.

While on the question of the mythology, I need only yet remark, on the subject of the Highland Fingal, that the antiquaries of that country are strangely forgetful when they assert that this hero abolished the Druidical Hierarchy: so dangerous is it to be always grasping at too much, whether of honour or aught else; particularly without the requisite learning. If Fingal "put down the Druids," he could not be a Celt of the distant date which these antiquaries desire, as that was his own reli-

gion. If he abolished Druidism as a Christian Knight, the poems would be reduced to a period within the fifth century, supposing that he were still a Celt; and within the eighth or ninth, if a Scandinavian. It is much safer to have nothing to do with this personage; who acts rather too many parts for his consistency and for that of Highland antiquarian systems.

I believe I may as well end this discussion, in which I would willingly defend the Ossianic poetry, if I could, no less from its injudicious friends than its enemies. I hope, at least, that it will be accepted as a proof of good wishes, by all the worthy Donalds whose petty errors have occasionally come across me. As to the antiquity which I should desire to see established, let it be recollected that there is nothing in the early condition of the Celtic nation at large, to render such a supposition absurd and ludicrous, as was said of these poems originally; since some portions of it were highly civilized, and since there is reason to think that the western one possessed a degree of civilization, sufficient, at least, for the production of poetry of this class. It was not a very refined age that produced the Iliad and the Odyssey. But if the antiquity is high, it is vain for the Scots and the Irish to dispute longer as to the right; since it belongs equally to both. I need not enter here into the dispute whether the Scots, (the Scoto-Celts,) came originally from Ireland; because, under any view, they were one people. The division, even to a tolerably late period, was scarcely more than geographical. Nothing but entire ignorance of their own history, could have led those who were so eager after the antiquity of the poems, to originate and to battle this question. Even if the antiquity were very far less, Ossian, be he who he may, one man or more, was equally a Highlander as an Irishman; and it is even possible that

he may have written in both countries, not in one only. That point will not now be determined; and it has already been seen how the balance inclines. But it must be remembered also, that for the Highlanders absolutely to exclude the Irish in any participation, and to claim the poet and all his heroes alike, is to reduce the antiquity of this poetry to a date posterior to that at which the two countries became absolutely separate, and which may be fixed, possibly, though uncertainly, somewhere about 1300; as, even after the retreat of the Norwegians, some of the Lords or Chiefs of the Isles appear to have held lands in Ireland, and there was, at least, a considerable communication. It is for those who will take the trouble to think coolly on this subject, to consider which theory they will prefer; but they must recollect that nature has set her good things on the right hand and on the left, and that it is not in their power to reconcile contradictions and to enjoy every thing: they must choose, whether they will or not, and learn to be content with that which is, at least, possible.

LOCH HOURN. WINDS. EDUCATION.

This embarking to plough the salt deep in a black ship for two or three months, is very much like jumping out of bed in a cold frosty morning: notwithstanding all the coming pleasures. To see "Neptunum procul e terra furentem," and to quit the "tangling woodbine, the musk rose and eglantine," for hard lurches and bilge water, is like the first blow. But it is half the battle also; and thus, when once we have begun, we plough on, till we find ourselves in St. Kilda or elsewhere, almost wondering how. So much does the inertia of mind resemble that of matter; so like is man's head to a tennis ball. Give either of them a kick, and they continue in motion for a time proportioned to the impulse, minus the friction and other impediments. Let the kick be given by the devil, and the soul and body depart together at a tangent, crossing all obstacles, till they are stopped by a Fi. fa., or knock their brains out against the gallows. An insufficient impulse from some casual good principle, generates a logarithmic spiral, which, after a few diminishing turns, falls into a centre of rest. The more fortunate concurrence of forces produces a revolution of order,—and thus the world goes round.

Thus I reached Garveloch, and North Rona, and Cape Rath, and Shetland, and twenty other strange places, which I had long contemplated on the map, just as we look at mountains in the moon, and with much the same hope; and many places too which I had long and often seen in the blue distance, amid storms and clouds and

roaring seas and foul winds, and which I had as much despaired of reaching as the moon itself. Such it is to make the first effort: Fate takes care of the rest: and if she does not always manage it very well, it is not very certain that we should have managed it much better ourselves. But it is a fine thing too to have a jack-a-lanthorn in chase; something which is only to be found at the tail of the rainbow: without which, it is likely we should have no pursuits at all. If we cannot attain it, still, "c'est bon qu'on la cherche," and thus also we reach Shetland and St. Kilda,—or Egypt, if it so happens. The quadrature of the circle, virtue, the alkahest, perfect love, the polar basin, the longitude, the last note on the finger board, 'tis all one; if we do not catch it, we catch something else; and the dog has just as much happiness in pursuing his tail as if he could get it between his teeth. If I did not find what I expected in Morven and Loch Hourn, I found what I did not expect; and, besides, there is a satisfaction in not having found it, because I am now sure that it is not there.

Though the district of Morrer, which separates Loch Morrer from Loch Nevish, is mountainous and rugged, it falls far short, in these respects, of Knoydart, which lies between the latter inlet and Loch Hourn, and which is indeed one of the loftiest as well as wildest tracts in Scotland.* There is a peculiarly savage character in these hills; not only from the quantity of bare rock which they expose, but from the mode in which they appear heaped on each other; as if, instead of rising and jostling each other in the usual manner from a common base, or from the general level, a new set had been created or let fall on the tops of the first. I do not know from what joke it has been that the name of heaven, (Nevish,) has been conferred on one of these lochs, and

that of Hourn, or hell, on the other; being, as they are, next door neighbours. Their sponsors did not certainly show much taste in the distinction; since, in point of picturesque beauty and grandeur, Loch Hourn has no competitor on the sea coast, and scarcely indeed in all Scotland.

In making my passage from Loch Nevish to Loch Hourn, I met again with one of those remarkable partial winds, of which I have mentioned two other instances so lately, in Bute and Arran. It is the more worth noticing, as these extraordinary states of the atmosphere have been almost entirely overlooked by philosophers and by seamen alike, and as they are quite at variance with any theory of wind that has yet been proposed. There was a dead calm, reaching, as far as could be discovered, all the way from Airdnamurchan up the Sound of Sleat, and to nearly the southern boundary of Loch Hourn. But here we found so smart a breeze from the west, that the vessels passing through it were obliged to lower their topsails and reef their mainsails. The breadth of this current was about two miles, and where it ceased, there was again a calm to the northward. So very decided was the line of separation between the breeze and the calm, that, in an instant, we were obliged to lower our own gaff topsail on meeting it, when, after running through it with a velocity of seven or eight knots, we entered so suddenly and violently into the calm, as to bring all the sails immediately aback. I observed this appearance for at least three hours; and it is worthy of remark, that the stream of wind was accompanied by a line of clouds aloft, while the atmosphere on both sides, above the calm, was clear and blue.

I only reached Loch Hourn in time to anchor for the night and enjoy the splendour of a setting sun; but,

with a good fortune which must be esteemed rare in this place, if I am to judge by what I was told, the next day was equally beautiful. My informer was a young girl of fourteen or fifteen, whom I found on the shore, weeding some miserable potatoes: and, condoling with her on the climate, I enquired, among other things, how long the snow remained on the ground. "Weel I wot," was the answer, "it never gangs till the rain comes." A pleasing alternative this. My story, to be sure, is very much like a standing and well-known joke about Inveraray; but my little lassie had certainly never heard that tale, and did as certainly make, to me, the remark which I have thus, most veraciously, transmitted to you.

Besides its climate, which is notorious among the notorious, Loch Hourn was once celebrated for a Spirit, or a Taisch, or a fairy, or what not, called the Glas lich, who (or which) used to wander about the hills, doing,—no one knows what. When the sun had set and all was still, I sat down on the rudder head, watching the clouds of night as they settled on the mountain tops, turning grey and greyer as they crept lower and lower down, till a black abyss seemed to yawn beneath them, and the water itself became dark as the hills. I must own that I never saw a place fitter for ghosts. With a little more of the Ossianic œstrus, I might easily have imagined every light mist that floated on the hill-side, a spirit: but it would have been with just as good reason as if I had supposed that the fine, handsome, hospitable, specimen of a Highlander who came on board to visit us, was the very Barrisdale who used to levy black mail and perform similar feats, in this very noted region, some "sixty years since." Certainly, as a den of thieves, or gentlemen drovers, or cearnachs, or whatever is the correct technical term, I know not where a finer stronghold than

Loch Hourn could be picked out: the very possession was enough to make a man turn Cartouche, Montoni, or Barrisdale; for, except by a fleet, the king of this region must have been unassailable. Even the new road to the head of the loch would give the present Barrisdale or Arnisdale very little concern, if they chose to set up as private kings or Ephori; disclaiming allegiance to King George the fourth and renouncing obedience to the Regiam Majestatem.

This inlet forms three distinct turns, nearly at right angles to each other, penetrating into the country to a distance of about eleven miles, and, at its extremity, meeting an excellent new road that joins the western military road at Glengarry. The characters of these three parts are different, and it is the most interior which contains the peculiar scenery that renders Loch Hourn so remarkable. For nearly half the distance from the entrance, it can only be said that the views are grand, as, with such mountain boundaries, they could not fail to be. About the middle, it appears to ramify into two branches; but the one soon terminates in something like a deep and spacious bay, wild, bold, and deserving of far more examination than I had time to bestow on it. There is much character in the mountains that enclose this bay, in which Barrisdale is situated; and, above, in particular, they display a degree of rude and rocky desolation, almost unequalled in Scotland, and not less grand than rude.

The other branch is continued for some miles, terminating at length in a deep glen; and, from one end to the other, it displays a rapid succession of scenes no less grand than picturesque, and not often equalled in Scotland; but of a character so peculiar that I know of no place to which they can be compared. The land, on

both sides, is not only very lofty, but very rapid in the acclivities; while, from the narrowness of the water, compared to the altitude of the boundaries, there is a sobriety in some places, and, in others, a gloom, thrown over the scenery, which constitutes perhaps the most peculiar and striking feature, if feature it can be called, of this place. On this altitude and breadth of general disposition, and on a magnitude of scale, whether in the whole or in the ornamental parts, which is quite peculiar to this spot, depends the magnificence of this scenery; a character from which Loch Hourn never deviates. The general style of the mountain outline is no less various than grand, and the faces of the hills are equally varied in form and arrangement; so that though there is consistency, there is no identity of character in the different scenes, and we are not wearied, as happens in so many other places, in pursuing a landscape, of which the only variety is, that it is greater or less, more near or more distant. What belongs to ornament, and what therefore constitutes the essential parts of the middle ground and nearly the whole of the foregrounds, is as broad and fine in its style as the general basis of the landscape: a circumstance also which is more remarkable in Loch Hourn than in any place I know: even the smaller parts possessing none of that minuteness of manner which is so often a source of offence in scenery of this class.

Words cannot convey any idea of the details of this landscape. But I may say that the varieties depend, in a great measure, on the intricacy of what are technically called the side screens, often folding over each other and again retiring unexpectedly, and no one of them continuing long enough to weary the spectator; while every fresh angle or recess displays some variation of form or character. The shores, on which the immediate fore-

ground must always depend, are equally various in character and equally quick in change, while they also possess a remarkable consistency or harmony with the general scene. It is equally fortunate that, at every point, some foreground, and generally a very full and marked one, is to be found; so that we have never to lament the meagreness of a splendid mass of mountain scenery standing on a vapid flat of water. The sides of the hills, on which the middle ground must chiefly depend in this class of scenery, are singularly rich in ornament and variety; from the combination of woods, deep ravines, projecting rocks, interspersed pasture, and precipices, often of great magnitude; the whole being enlivened by frequent torrents or cascades, and by detached trees clinging to every point of rock where they can find a footing.

From the general magnitude of this scenery, the colouring is more atmospheric than local, and is consequently always harmonious. But the local colouring is no less perfect, for the most part; a due balance being preserved in the greens and browns of the woods and pastures, by means of the grey rocks. Whenever, at the upper extremity, the water is stained by peat, it assumes that fine rich brown of its own, which, in most alpine scenery, harmonizes so well with the local and general colouring; and when it takes the tint of the atmosphere, it can, of course, never fail to be right. In respect to light and shadow, it need scarcely be said, that power and variety of effect can never be wanting in scenery thus constituted; and when it is recollected what the climate of Loch Hourn is, it is equally unnecessary to say that, in every thing which depends on atmospheric effects, it cannot be exceeded for grandeur and variety. In the terrific and sublime it has few rivals; and while the landscapes are invariably grand, they are almost innumerable. Where

this loch terminates, a wild and deep glen conveys the road up to that level on which it proceeds afterwards towards Glengarry, from which point, all beauty disappears for a long space.

In returning in the afternoon to the anchorage, I was much troubled with an incessant repetition of profound calms and smart breezes, which, in some places, rendered the navigation extremely hazardous. I placed this to the usual account of squalls, till on arriving at the vessel, I perceived that there were, in this part, three distinct belts of rough water, alternating with as many calms, and extending right across the loch. These also might have passed for parallel lines of wind, similar to what I had met outside, had I been satisfied with the first suggestion; but I saw that this could not be the case, as they were, in fact, at right angles to the course of the wind. By passing through the whole in the boat, I easily found that they were the cause of the supposed repetition of calms and squalls which I had experienced before; and it was more important to perceive, that where the rough water first began, the breeze was very moderate, that it increased to such a degree in the middle of the belt as to oblige me, either to lower the sail or to luff up, and that, in a similar manner, it gradually died away towards the further edge.

The explanation of this appearance seemed, after some consideration, to be sufficiently plain. The breeze, which blew up the loch, or from the west, must have been moving in an undulating plane, and must at the same time have formed a limited horizontal stream, as that one outside, on the day before, had moved in a vertical one. Thus, wherever the convexity of the undulation touched the water, the breeze was felt, while a calm reigned in the points that lay beneath its concavity. I have often had

occasion to notice curvilinear winds, but I never before observed one so remarkable as this, or in which the demonstration was so evident. It may be added to the remarkable case mentioned in this letter, and to those described in the account of Arran, Bute, and Ben Lomond, as an example of what has never experienced the attention from meteorologists which it deserves.

As I cannot afford to write you a treatise on winds, any more than on the endless subjects which cross me here at every corner, and which I must be content, like the mouse, merely to "dip my whiskers and my tail in," I shall only say that they are popular prejudices which suppose, first that winds move in straight lines, secondly that they move in large masses, and thirdly that they flow parallel to the horizon. All these things they may do very often, but they certainly do not always. Of partial and curved currents I have already given you examples, as well as of opposing and contending ones, and could add hundreds more. But the curvature of winds is one of the most common irregularities; and thus it is far from rare, on shore at least, to find an east wind, rather paradoxically, blowing from the south or the west. In such cases the general atmosphere is moving from the east, while these counter currents are involved in it; as may be proved by the state of the atmosphere as to colour and moisture, by the fact that the general wind continues east at sea, or during the night, and, often for weeks; while, during the heat of the day only, this diversion of its course, and that only over a particular tract of land, takes place.

That, in the vicinity of mountains, such diversions of a wind should occur, is easily explained by reverberation or obstruction; and therefore it causes no surprise when, under the Cuchullin hills or in Rum, we find squalls

moving perpendicularly downwards or upwards, or in twenty different directions in a minute. But the same happens at sea, as can be seen at any time; nor will the presence of land explain any of the more complicated cases which I have described. In fact, it would be as well if philosophers would confess their ignorance, not only of the causes of these irregular winds, but of any wind, since we might then have some chance of discovering them. No theory is of any value that will not explain the whole of the appearances; and it is plain that no supposition of a vacuum, that ever was formed, under any conceivable modification, will account for such cases as I have described. To imagine a breeze, for example, travelling in from the west sea in a rapid current of a mile or two in breadth, to fill a vacuum at Fort Augustus or Aberdeen, while the whole atmosphere close at hand is quietly looking on, is a supposition that only could enter into the minds of philosophers; a class of persons which has a solution for every difficulty, which prides itself, not on knowing, but on being thought to know, every thing, and which applies to its soul a flattering unction, in a few terms to which it attaches no intelligible ideas, and generally, none at all. But I think I hear you say, Surge tandem Carnifex.

But if it is a sad thing that, philosopher as I am, philosophers as we all are, we cannot explain this, it would be much sadder if we could. I at least am in no hurry. We must not kill all our foxes. We should soon have nothing to do if we could gain all our wishes at this rate; and nothing left to wish for either. "The longitude hit on," witchcraft, magic, astrology, all extinct; the Confectio lapidis abandoned, music in the hands of Beethoven, politics reduced to a simple equation by the Congress of Vienna, all theatrical excel-

lence attained by Kean and Grimaldi, all poetical and romantic invention exhausted by Mr. Hogg. What on earth is left to our aspirations: were it not for the glorious uncertainty of the law, and these plaguy winds, and some other trifling matters, we might fairly lay ourselves down on the top of the Cuchullin, and cry because we had no more worlds to conquer.

I ought to say of the land about Loch Hourn, what I indeed ought of all that mass of mountain land which lies to the westward of the great Caledonian valley, and what I may as well say here, once for all, of the whole of the western mountainous region as far as Cape Rath, that it must, generally speaking, be abandoned by the merely curious traveller, as it has been now, by all but the shepherds and their sheep. In truth, if it is not inaccessible, in a rigid sense, it is very little better, to a traveller; while it offers nothing to repay him for his toils, which are very real and very serious; not merely labours to write a pathetic sentence about, and then to rub our hands at a good fire when they are over; but consisting of good sheer hard work, loss of way, sleeping in the moors, weariness and wet, disappointment and fatigue, storm and starvation. Population there is none, and roads there are few. Wherever the latter exist, an exception may be made, as they will conduct a traveller from point to point. Yet these are but rare, and, such as they are, they only lead in transverse directions, from Inverness or elsewhere, to the coast. Nothing but a bird can travel this country in any line parallel to it. I can speak feelingly on this subject; and in saying "experto crede," may also add, that, though the labour and inconvenience should be despised, there is nothing to gain in return, by a mere tourist; as there is no scenery worth investigating, except in those valleys through which the

roads are conducted, or in the inlets, which are accessible by means of a boat.

I did not leave Loch Hourn without arguing some points of political economy with my young friend the potatoe weeder; whence I derived some information about Glen Elg which I do not choose to repeat: not because the young lady's opinion was unimportant, but unfortunately because I knew it to be too true. So far from that, I know not that I ever met a more acute and clear female intellect. In six months drilling, not potatoe drilling, she might have taken her place, even with the Espinasses for aught I know, instead of wasting her economics on the desert air of Loch Hourn. Among many very real sources of sorrow, the poor girl's greatest grievance was that her younger sister would be deprived of her "schuling;" (it was a low country family transplanted hither;) and this loss of education seemed almost to bring tears into her eyes. One of my boatmen also became very pathetic on the same subject; and wondered how any person could live in a country where their children could not have their "schooling."

This feeling, of the value, as well as of the necessity of education, is however less general in the Highlands than in the Lowlands; a circumstance, perhaps, easily explained, by the opportunities being more rare. But wherever the Highlanders have access to schools, I have observed the same anxiety; except in the solitary case of Benbecula, where the people refused to let their children go to school, lest, when they grew up, they should leave their homes for a better place. It would not be easy to find a much stronger argument in favour of education, as it relates to some of the collaterally useful consequences to be derived from it.

The difficulty of procuring education in the High-

lands, is, on the present system, nearly inseparable from the peculiar nature and state of the country. It is impossible for the children to have access to the parish schools in many instances: sometimes, in consequence of their mere extent; at others, because the parishes include two or more islands. Very often they are sent to board in the neighbourhood of the school; but although such board is not expensive, it is generally far beyond the means of the mass of the people. Thus, education is almost limited to those who are within a practicable distance of it; but the distances to which they go, are a sufficient evidence of the value which the parents set upon instruction. It is unnecessary to affect to be pathetic on such a plain subject; and still less so to enter into any grave and trite discussions on the advantages and on the necessity of educating the lower orders. The question has now been taken up by hands that appear no less able than willing to extend the system, even in the Highlands; and, to the progress already made, doubtless much will shortly be added by the new system of itinerancy, or rather, of transferable schools. I would only remark, that it has lately become comparatively easy to effect this object; and it is one of the advantages, and not among the least, that will be derived from the new system of distributing the lands, which has been so much and so unjustly calumniated. In former times, the population was so much dispersed throughout the mountains, that no number of schools, and scarcely any mode of transference, could have been rendered effectual. On the present plan, the people have been condensed, and chiefly along the sea shores; so that a numerous mass is now found, where formerly there were only a few scattered hamlets. When once the power and the funds of the Society for carrying this work into effect have been ascer-

tained, or whenever they shall have become adequate, it will not be difficult to distribute or transport the schools in such a manner as to render them ten times as efficacious as they have ever yet been. The proprietors and the ministers of parishes, all of whom are laudably anxious for the improvement of the people, will readily co-operate with the Society in pointing out the places where these establishments will be most effectual; and if the acquisition of English is made essential, whether the Gaelic be taught or not, there is no doubt that they will prove a most efficacious instrument in improving the state of society in this neglected country; to omit those advantages of a moral and religious nature on which it is quite superfluous to offer even one word.

I have rather indeed chosen to avoid this subject, because it has already been discussed by many able hands, and because I really know not that I have any information to give about it, as it concerns the Highlands, that is not known to the whole world. But it seems to me that their neighbours the English, and not seldom ourselves also, commit an error, of which the consequences are more important than they at first appear, when they attribute the superior morality of the Scots in general, to education. This opinion, taken as an undisputed fact, has been one of the great arguments lately brought forward in favour of popular education; as if that alone would redress all the evils to be remedied, or as if the mere act of learning to read, would (I do not speak it nationally) convert an Englishman into a Scotchman.

It does not require much consideration to see that this notion is unfounded. I will not, and indeed I need not ask, what it really is which renders the national morality of Scotland superior to that of England: though

there would be very little difficulty in assigning the causes. Yet there has been a good deal of exaggeration and mis-statement on this subject. England, never touchy about its national character, and always bearing censure with the greatest good humour, has suffered the remark to pass so long, that it is now received as a demonstrated truth. It is very far indeed from being that. London, and the great manufacturing towns, are produced as specimens of English morality, and balanced against all Scotland, of which the population is comparatively a rural one, and in which the proportion of manufacturing towns is very small. To compare them with Edinburgh and Glasgow, would be more like justice. And if it is considered that London is the general mart and resort for all professional vice and immorality from every part of the Empire, the comparison of even London and Edinburgh would not be a just one. It is little just also, independently of this; because of the far greater quantity of the lower class of population in the former, always leading to the increase of vice in an accelerating ratio, and because of the infinitely greater opportunities and temptations, not only to common plunder, but to every species of vice. I doubt much whether, abstracting, as we are in justice bound to do, all that which constitutes the real difference between London and Edinburgh, the immorality of the latter is not equal, perhaps greater than that of the former, regard being also had, numerically, to the inhabitants. Nor must it be forgotten, that, in the non-manufacturing English districts, which offer the only fair comparison with Scotland, there is as little exertion of the criminal laws required as in that country. Wales, among others, which, for this purpose, may fairly be considered as England, presents as many maiden assizes as even the Highlands. Let us not also forget,

though I do not pretend to assign the cause, that, in the latter country, much of this vice and crime has been overlooked. It is acknowledged, and was never indeed denied, that many hundred sheep were stolen, within a few years, in the former, not distant, condition of Sutherland. Yet not a single prosecution took place. Had twenty been stolen in Kent, they would have led to as many transportations. I will not say more on this subject, because I should be very sorry to cast any stigma on Scotland: but we must always recollect that we are all Britons now, and that each part of the Empire claims equal justice at our hands. England has been always, and grossly, calumniated on this point.

But, to return to our subject. If this presumed superior morality of Scotland depended on education merely, how are we to explain why that great mass of Highlanders, which has been hitherto deprived of this advantage, should be fully on a par in this respect, to say no less, with their countrymen of the Lowlands. It must be obvious also to every one, for it is too lamentably plain to be denied, that the national morality of Scotland is rapidly declining, while its education is rather increasing than diminishing. The causes of this also are sufficiently obvious; but as I need not enter into them, I shall only request those who have adopted this theory with regard to Scotland and England respectively, to reconsider a subject on which we cannot trifle with impunity. It has also been far too little considered, during the heat of this question, what the different effects are which education produces on a rural and a dispersed population, and on one which is condensed in towns and manufactories. It is most important to reflect on the different destination, or consequences, of education in these two cases, and on the addition which the power of reading may make to

those evils which seem almost necessarily to flow from the condensation of the lower orders. Poison and honey may both be extracted from the same flower by different agents; and it is a melancholy reflection, that when we have enabled the people, in these cases, to read their Bibles, that becomes, perhaps, the only book which they will never open. But to have done with a subject, and a painful one also, where I am transgressing my bounds; and to return to my female philosopher.

You must not think me joking, when I proposed my little friend for a distinguished place among the "femmes sçavantes." I have long been convinced, on the contrary, that if we would but take the trouble to look for it, we should find just as much talent, numerically, among what are vulgarly called the lower orders as among ourselves, who have been stigmatized, by a certain class, with the title of the privileged one. Nature seems to have scattered her brains about, at hazard, as she has done every thing else; and those who happened to be gaping, no matter in what rank, have caught them. It is all a scramble alike; talents, wealth, happiness, every thing; there is but a certain small portion of sugar-plums mixed with the mass of gypsum that is thrown among us, and lucky are those who get them: she cares not. But the Corinthian capital of society knows nothing of all these abilities, because it never looks for them. Such is the consequence of a free government, says some one; having this political vision to enjoy, they must compound for the rest. No—such is the consequence of commerce. This is, if circuitously, a result of the base and contemptible aristocracy of wealth in which England glories. It is a thousand times more grievous than that of birth; more painful at least than even that which was claimed by ancient Chivalry, though this did produce

such uproars as that of the Jacquerie. That is the real line of separation; and any one who knows the people, may remark how they feel it. You or I perhaps may despise the paryenu contractor or Indian whose dinners we eat: but the people abhor them, while they still yield their respect to ancient birth. Such was the contempt with which my little philosopher here spoke of her present landlord, comparing him with the former hereditary one; mistaking him for a mere wealthy upstart; which did not happen to be the fact.

But I need not tell you, Scott, I need not at least tell the Author of Waverley, what the abilities of the lower orders are; for he who has written all these volumes must know it well. There are not many of us whose professions and pursuits admit of forming this acquaintance: and those who do, will often have reason to blush for their own inferiority. There are very few of those who are now making this clamour about education, who are in the least aware of it; and should that system proceed, I fear we must make a dozen of Lord Chancellors instead of one, and that Wellington will no longer be without a successor or a rival. Many times would I have willingly exchanged my brains, and every thing that has ever been lodged within them, for the naked unfurnished material that I have found among common seamen and coblers and razor grinders: I believe I should have gained by an exchange with even the little potatoe weeder who has thus led me astray. I am sure I should have made a most advantageous one with the mate of our ship, whose whole reading, nearly, had lain in the log-book and Hamilton Moore. With the tortuous rhetoric and ratiocination of Wyndham, and the hard-headedness of Johnson, this salt-water fish had such a rapidity of comprehension, and such a tact for the strong and weak

side of an argument, that I was a mere child in his hands, and was often inclined to fancy that he knew better than me what he could have only picked up from myself in the occasional symposiums of a rainy afternoon. His name is Cairns. I care not who knows it; and he need not: but if nature had made me William Cairns, it should have gone hard but I would have sat on the woolsack, as he might have done himself, with a few years of drilling in Coke and Bracton and the Term reports. If I were to say that I had found, numerically, more native talent among the Scots than the English, it would be to state a fact merely, but not one from which to draw conclusions; because my acquaintance with them has been greater. I do not believe it to be true; but as education is more diffused in Scotland, the abilities of the people may be rendered somewhat more obvious.

If the world at large does not know more of this, it is because it does not render the common people justice. We hold aloof from them, as if our dignity could be injured by the communication; thus widening a breach which is too wide already. It is remarked that they do not trust us, even when we wish to do them good; and this is now complained of in the new system of education. We cannot much wonder at this. We come forward on a sudden as the patrons of those whom we formerly did not condescend to know; and we may ask ourselves what we should feel to each other in a similar case. Let us become their acquaintances, as far as we can, and they will soon be glad to receive us as valuable friends. We need not fear the consequences of familiarity. When they are now insolent, it is from the feeling of pride and neglect. When once they find that we respect them in their own rank, they will not be long in learning to respect us in ours.

GLEN ELG. PICTISH TOWERS.

To be eternally sitting in the stern sheets of a boat, with the helm in your hand, watching the point of the sail and the coming sea, is wonderfully friendly to meditation, and may account, I suppose, for some of my own dreams and lucubrations. Yet there must not be too much wind, nor such a sea as you may find off the entrance of Loch Hourn and the Point of Sleat; else these speculations are likely to come to much the same end as those of Palinurus. If Harvey had passed a few months in a boat in the Western Islands, the starry heavens only know to how many volumes his contemplations on them might have extended. It is also a very good test of the variable nature and quantity of our courage. If there is an organ of courage, which I know not that Dr. Spurzheim has yet determined, it must be something like a barometric tube, subject to ups and downs and vacillations. On shore, we know nothing of all this; unless perchance in fighting. But that is a bad test, as it only occurs now and then. He, on the contrary, whose life hangs on the top of a wave or on a rope's end, every day and all day long, every hour and minute for months, can trace the vacillations of the mercury in his machine with the most delicate nicety. He can feel when he is as bold as a lion and as timid as a weasel; and he will often wonder too, why he should be either the one or the other. Whatever philosophy he may adopt on this subject, he will, at any rate, not conclude that the seat of courage is

in the heart, as boxers and poets think, nor in the brain, as the modern phrenologists will determine. "Whatever they maintain, of Alma in the heart or brain, depend on it, and let me tell ye, the seat of courage is the belly." Hence it unquestionably is, that even the schoolboy says he has no stomach to fight. It is fearful work, in a boat and in squally weather, before breakfast; and still worse at night, after having been out all day without even a biscuit: but let one be discovered in some forgotten pocket, or a lump of cheese in the corner of the locker, and immediately we all become as brave as game cocks, and the squalls and the seas are forgotten. Why else are these very game cocks fed on beef, as the ancient Athletæ were; and why will "one Englishman beat five Frenchmen at any time." "C'est le rost bif;" and if "Monsieur Basimecu" does not fight, it is only when he has soupe maigre for all diet. Our courage is all in the keeping of Archæus, depend upon it. Hence it is variable; and hence it was that I received a great fright in leaving Loch Hourn to plough my liquid way to Glen Elg.

Glen Elg is a district of some extent, containing two principal valleys, Glen More and Glen Beg, in which its only attractions are found. There is a road through each; the former having been the original road to Sky when Bernera barracks were built as a military post. These are still standing; a memorial of times that seem now like a dream of many centuries old. There is nothing very striking in the scenery of Glen More, though it is far from deficient in beauty; but there are not many Highland Glens more attractive than Glen Beg. At Eilan Reoch, where it is contracted to a very narrow dimension, it is exceedingly picturesque; a fine river meandering under abrupt and rocky hills, accompanied

by much wood, and by trees of ancient and respectable growth; and the whole enlivened by the view of ships navigating the Kyle rich, and of the opposite mountains of Sky. Here also the mineralogist may, if he pleases, regale himself with specimens of Actinolite under various forms; a huge rock of this beautiful substance occupying the summit of a hill just over the house of Eilan Reoch. Beyond this, the valley expands; in many places, richly wooded; in almost all, presenting scattered wood or trees, and enlivened by streams and torrents. One cascade, of considerable height and size, is especially worthy of notice; tumbling down in its deep channel, in the very midst of a forest, and hence producing very uncommon as well as picturesque effects.

But this valley is rendered still more interesting by those remains of Pictish towers which it contains, and which, if not perfect, are still sufficiently entire to explain the structure of these singular buildings. To the landscape, they are of great importance, as giving a character to the different scenes; affording that point of reference without which the finest is so often insipid. In an antiquarian view, they are even more interesting; not only on account of their singularity, antiquity, and obscurity, but because they are by much the most perfect, as well as the most accessible, specimens on the mainland of Scotland. This subject is so far from having been exhausted, that it has been utterly misapprehended; and although these examples have been mentioned in Pennant's work, that notice is both slender and useless. Even if he had treated it better than he has done, they are far too interesting to be passed over lightly; and they would repay the labour of a visit to this place, though it had not those additional attractions which arise from the magnificence of its extent and the variety and richness of its scenery.

The pursuit of architectural antiquities has been often ridiculed by those who can discover no merit or beauty in a rude stone or a cairn, a Roman brick or the doubtful remains of an ancient camp; and who laugh at the ardour and heat with which antiquaries battle about round and pointed arches, mouldings, mullions, and intersections. Every pursuit may be caused to appear ridiculous by the manner in which it is followed; but the one in question is far from deserving either ridicule or neglect. It is often, only by their architectural remains, however rude, that we can trace the history, connexions, and migrations, of ancient nations; and these often throw a gleam of light, of no small importance, on points respecting which there are no other records, written or traditional. They present us with important features in the history of man; marking his existence, his progress, and his decline; constituting, in short, as it may be said, the moral physiognomy of the earth. They constitute this at least, as far as it is permanent: agriculture and cultivation carrying with them marks too perishable to be transmitted to a distant posterity. In the works that remain of ancient days, whether barbarous or civilized, we learn something, at least, of the nature of the funereal usages of nations, of their domestic habits, their modes of warfare, and their worship. By these also we trace the progress of civilization and of taste; and, in contemplating the memorials which man has thus left behind, learn to form opinions, if imperfect, yet not perhaps inaccurate, of his moral and political feelings and condition. If the page of history has descended to us, it is illustrated by these remains; when tradition alone has existed, and that has been swallowed up in the revolutions of time, they form our sole guide: nor is it a small advantage derived from the cultivation of this study, that the sight of these memorials recalls to our minds, with a liveliness and an interest that mere narration

never can, that which nations performed and that which they suffered; the battle field, the camp, the temple, and the tomb.

It is much to be lamented, that, with respect to the more remote and barbarous ages, and where they are most required, these memorials should be so rare. In this country, we have, in particular, great cause for regret, that so little remains to instruct us respecting the origin, progress, and connexions, of the tribes by which it was first peopled. For this defect, we must perhaps look to the peculiar architectural usages of our early ancestors. There is great reason to think, as I have elsewhere shown, that many, or rather most, of their buildings were formed of wood. It is certain that, before their conversion to Christianity, the temples of the Scandinavians were wooden structures, as were those of the early Christians before them; and that the same practice existed in Britain, is well known to those who have investigated the history of our earliest ecclesiastical architecture. Yet many ancient works of stone also exist; and, among these, be their constructors who they may, there are none much more remarkable than the conical towers which have led to these observations.

Though there are slight variations in these buildings, whether in the general outline, the dimensions, or the proportions and disposition of some of the parts, they are not so important but that one general description will serve for the whole. The form is a cone, truncated; resembling so much, in its curved outline, a glass-house or a tile-kiln, that these will convey a very lively idea of the external appearance of the Pictish towers. The exterior displays no windows nor apertures of any kind, except a rude and narrow doorway; nor any marks of ornament or projections, nor defences of any nature. Within the

exterior cone, is placed a second cone, or a cylinder, as it may happen: this concentric and similar wall being so proportioned, that while, at the base, there is a considerable interval between the two, they unite at the top. The centre is an area open to the sky; and the buildings give no reason for supposing that they have ever been roofed. The vacancy between the two walls is divided into a number of tiers, or stories, varying from three to five or more, by floors of stone, which make the whole circuit; so that by entering at one end into any of these galleries, we can pass out at the other. A rude staircase communicates through the whole; and they are lighted from the interior area, by square apertures or windows, but, commonly, only at one point; the whole of these openings, which are merely vacancies in the masonry, standing in a vertical line from the floor to the summit. I must add that the lowest gallery is generally, if not always, sufficient to admit a man to walk upright, and wide enough to suffer him to turn freely, while it is sometimes even sufficient to admit two a-breast; but that, in succession upwards, they diminish, as a natural consequence of the inclination of the concentric walls; so that the uppermost will sometimes not even admit a child. The masonry is dry, or without lime, but remarkably well laid; and the lines of the curvature are beautifully preserved throughout. The floors of the galleries consist of single flags, and the window apertures are, in a similar manner, divided by transoms of stone.

With respect to those in this spot, the variations of form and dimensions are very trifling, as far as can be discovered from the ruinous state they are now in; but their principal measurements are as follows. In the first, the height is 30 feet, and it has the appearance of having lost 6 or 8; and in the second, the height is 25 or

26. The diameter, of the area within, is 33 feet in the the first, and 30 in the second. The doors of entrance vary from 4½ to 6 feet in height, but this is rendered uncertain by the rubbish. The height of the galleries is about six feet, and the breadth of the lowest the same; but they are reduced in this dimension, as they proceed upwards, to four, three, and two; and, in one place, to only a few inches. Twelve feet may be safely taken as the thickness of the two walls, including the galleries; so that there remain three feet for each of the concentric walls, and the exterior diameter of the cone must be augmented to 45 and 42, in the two specimens now described.

It is unnecessary to describe the other examples which have been found in Scotland. Cordiner has given a full account of Dun Dornadil, of which nearly the lower half remains entire, and its general characters are precisely the same as those of the specimens in Glen Elg. Others which I saw in the north of Sutherland, are ruined to the very foundation, or near it; but that which remains, in all of them, is in every respect such as to justify the belief that a common design pervaded the whole. The remains of one still exists in Lewis, near Loch Bernera; but no others have been observed among the Western Islands. Of those which are known in Sutherland, three occur in the parish of Kildonan, and six in that of Farr. They are numerous in Rogart, and it seems that there must have been a chain of them on each side of Loch Brora. In Caithness, six or seven occur in the parish of Olrick, and their remains are also found at Wick and at Dunnet.

Though these remains occur rarely now in Shetland, it is certain that they were once numerous; but having, except one, been almost utterly demolished, it has be-

come difficult to discover their places, and impossible to procure any accurate account of most of them. The situation of six or eight can however still be ascertained. The entire one which I have mentioned, stands in the island of Moussa, and has been very laudably preserved by the proprietor, so as to be now the only perfect specimen in existence. It is of somewhat smaller dimensions than those in Glen Elg, as Dun Dornadil is larger; but, in all points of the construction, it perfectly corresponds; excepting that what may be called the vertical outline of the wall differs, so as to form a double curve. It serves, however, from its integrity, to prove that which could only have been inferred from the appearance of the others, namely, that they possessed no other entrance than the one low door, that there are no indications of their ever having had any roof, and that no windows or openings of any kind were directed outwards. This specimen, at the same time, serves to increase the difficulty respecting the galleries in the wall; since, the building being of smaller size, most of them are so narrow that it is perfectly impossible even for a child to force his way into them, and equally so for any human means to convert them into repositories or stores for property.

This is, in fact, the principal difficulty that occurs in attempting to explain the purposes of these buildings. In the lowest galleries of those in Glen Elg, it is easy to stand upright, as I just remarked; and it is not very difficult to pass through the next, or even the two succeeding ones, or to repose in them, unless where they have, evidently, been narrowed and distorted by the dislocation of the walls. But further up, that is not possible; and in the topmost story, not even a child could walk, as I have already said; while these must have been as useless as those of the smaller tower of Moussa

for the purpose of concealing property, as there could have been no means of introducing it for more than a few feet beyond the window, if the circle was complete.

It might be argued that the continuation of the interval between the concentric walls was a necessary consequence, or at least a convenience, arising from the adoption of that structure below. But it is plain that this argument is of no value; as, in that case, the upper floors would have been unnecessary, and the interval, after it became useless, should have been continued to the top without any horizontal divisions. The provision for lighting the upper galleries from the interior, is also continued to the summit, precisely in the same form as it is constructed at the bottom; an arrangement, which, on that view, would also have been quite superfluous. This part of the subject must therefore remain in darkness. It is probable that the lower galleries were places of retreat, or the chambers and dwellings of the inhabitants: others may have served for the concealment of property; but no use can possibly be assigned for the upper ones, although constructed in the same manner, and furnished with the same rude means of getting at them from within, to those at least who might be supposed diminutive enough to be capable of insinuating themselves so far.

As there is not the least reason to suppose that they ever had a roof, which would indeed have rendered the inner windows useless, the inner area must have been open to the sky, as I have already observed. Thus it might have served the ordinary purposes of a court, or might have been used for securing cattle, although it could contain but a few of these without inconvenience. These buidings, as I have said, contain no provision whatever for external defence, that is, by means of offensive

weapons; as there is neither loop-hole nor aperture of any kind outwards, and the summit of the building is inaccessible. How the doorway was secured, it is impossible to conjecture and in vain to speculate; but being no larger or higher than is absolutely necessary, it was probably so constructed for the purpose of rendering it more easily closed by some simple means.

If these buildings therefore were of a military character, as, to a certain degree, every building that was not a place for worship or justice must have been in a military age, they must be considered rather as strong houses than military posts; as they could neither accommodate any force nor repel an attack. And strong places they assuredly were, since they are incapable of being effectually assailed by any of the methods in ancient use, unless by mining. Were they, even now, provided with a platform and a gun, they would become both strong and formidable as Martello towers.

From the expensive nature of their construction, or the power of hands that must have been employed on them, it might be supposed that they were the palaces or castles of the chiefs or kings of the days in which they were erected. But it seems an insuperable objection to this notion, that four should have existed within so small a distance from each other in Glen Elg, or that so many should be found in Sutherland and in Shetland, not far asunder. The limits of territory that surround any one, are too narrow for any chief; and where all chiefs were in a state of general and constant hostility, it is not likely that they should have chosen to build so near to each other. It is equally impossible that they should have been the dwellings of the inhabitants in general, as the expense of erection bears no proportion to the limited

accommodation they could afford, and as they are, further, not sufficiently numerous for that purpose. Thus obscure must remain a question which I willingly leave to those antiquaries who may have means or powers of investigation superior to my own: lights which penetrate the invisible of antiquity, and too often dazzle the eye so as to create imaginary objects where they are insufficient to discover real ones.

It is not less interesting to inquire by what people and at what period they were erected: but this part of the subject is not much less obscure. I may, in the first place, repeat, that the masonry is remarkably perfect, with very few exceptions, unless where they have been forcibly injured for the sake of the stones. Very little settlement or dislocation has taken place in any of them; and although this must, in some measure, be attributed to the nature of the construction, there are marks about the stone work very perceptible to practised eyes, which bespeak an æra not extremely remote. The absence of lime would, in the opinion of many antiquaries, carry them beyond the time of the Romans; but this is a fallacious ground of judgment, for reasons which I need not here discuss. If we compare them with the common circular forts, attributed, and perhaps justly in many cases, to the Northmen, we shall find the masonry as much more refined and perfect as the structures themselves are; and should therefore be inclined to assign them to another people, or to a later period than the invasions which gave rise to these. I need not seriously ask whether they belong to the early periods of an imaginary Scottish monarchy; as Cordiner, arguing for his friend King Dornadil, would make us believe. This gentleman, as is said, was the fourth king from Fergus 1st; beginning to reign in the year 262 A.C., and reigning 28

years; as Buchanan has thought fit to repeat. He made laws for the regulation of hunting, and built Dun Dornadilla, of course. Requiescat in pace: and the theory too. Further of King Dornadil I need not enquire; as his name has been tacked to this tower for as good reasons as that of Fingal has to twenty places. But that he is a fictitious person admits of no doubt. He belongs neither to the apparently authentic series of the Pictish kings, nor to that of the Scottish ones. With Loarn, Fergus, the second of the fictitious, and the first of the real series of the Scottish kings, is only of 503, as I have had occasion to remark more than once already; and in the Pictish series, the first is Drust without a date, and Talore immediately following him, whose date is 451 A.D.

With regard to the people by whom they were erected, it is indifferent whether we ascribe them to the Picts or the Scandinavians; as there seems little reason to doubt that these were radically one and the same people. Those who were called Picts, might have erected them in one part of the country, perhaps at periods somewhat remote, while the Scandinavian invaders might have done the same elsewhere in later times. Certainly, at least, it has never been proved that the Picts occupied the Western Islands, though Pinkerton has thought fit to adopt this theory; and as one of these towers is found in Lewis, the question seems to be determined as far as it relates to these buildings being exclusively Pictish. Of the early Celts, or Gael, we are perfectly ignorant; but as they seem to have left no buildings of any kind, or none at least of any consequence, we cannot justly ascribe these structures to them; or at least we have no direct reasons for so doing. It is indeed a sufficient proof that these towers are not of Gaelic origin, that they are found in countries which this people seems

not to have occupied within any moderate period, if they ever did: and from this alone we might perhaps safely conclude that they were the works of the Northmen, who for so long a time held the Gaelic nation in subjection. Thus we may readily account for their existence in Shetland, and in Caithness and Sutherland; territories which, at an early period, were entirely occupied by the northern tribes; while their presence in Lewis and in Glen Elg is no more remarkable than the existence of numerous other works of the same people throughout the Western Islands and those parts of the Highlands which they so often conquered and so long held.

In the same manner, they have abounded in the Orkney islands, though now almost entirely vanished; but it may be considered a perfect and incontrovertible proof of their real origin, that they are still found in Norway. One, in particular, called Sualsburgh, has been described near Drontheim; and another, known by the name of Ymsburgh, occurs in Westrogothia. The very names Burgh and Dun, by which they are known, ought to be, in themselves, evidence of their Gothic parentage. Hence they must forfeit the name which they have so long borne; while they must also be refused those claims to a Caledonian and Celtic parentage, which some of our most recent antiquaries, and my most learned friend George Chalmers among others, have assigned them.

On this subject I may yet add, that the detection of human bones in the Glenmore of Glen Elg, need not be supposed to have any necessary connexion with these buildings. These places are far removed; while there may have been a "field of great men" at Bernera, as in many other places, from a thousand causes independent of these works, in a country which was a lasting scene of contention and warfare. It is still necessary to say,

that though there are now but two of these buildings remaining in Glen Elg, four are mentioned by Gordon. It is said that the stones of the others were carried off to build the barracks at Bernera; which is highly improbable, where stone abounded, and from the great distance to which the materials of these must have been carried.

Highland traditions, of the usual value, have been quoted to prove that they were ancient Celtic works; and by those whose researches ought to have taught them more discrimination. The tale is, that a mother built them for her four sons, Malcolm, Conil, Tellve and Troddan; or, as others quote them, Calman, Trodan, Eletha and Conul.' It is indifferent which; though a stanza of Gaelic poetry is quoted in confirmation of this theory. That any mother or mother's son in all the Highlands, should have built four towers that must have cost the revenue of any Highland Dynasty of those days for twenty years, is just as likely as that Fingal should have built St. Paul's, or that King Dornadil was a second Nimrod 260 years before Christ. But we may know what value to set on such antiquaries as these, when they assert that no such stones are found in Glen Elg, and that nothing like them exists nearer than the summit of Ben Nevis. As I said before of the Vitrified Forts, antiquaries should make themselves acquainted with the sciences and the arts with which they intermeddle. The stone of Ben Nevis is a porphyry, and not a slaty or a fissile rock. The stone of these towers is a fissile gneiss, and is so exactly that of the hills near which they lie, that we almost fancy we can trace the very rocks whence they have been taken.

LOCH DUICH, LOCH LONG, LOCH CARRON, LOCH KISHORN, LOCH TORRIDON, GAIRLOCH.

We had been anchored at the Cailleach stone, the very anchorage occupied by "Haco the aged" in his noted expedition, for two days, in the midst of fog and rain and wind and all manner of obscurity. The breeze had veered to the eastward, and, being tired of waiting, it was our business now, of course, to beat to the eastward, just as, on the days before, we had beat, first to the northward and then to the westward. All this beating to windward is very well for a seaman; for, while the ship is going, what is it to him: he must be on board at any rate; he must haul aft, and reef, and set another jib, and take in the gaff topsail, day after day, to the last hour of his life. It is pretty much the same to him whether he is at sea here, or there, since at sea he must be. But, to the unfortunate landsman who only exists on terra firma, to whom a ship is a prison, and the sea ipecacuanha, whose legs are cramped with rest, whose shoulders are bruised to jelly in his birth, and who, for ever and in all weathers, smells bilge water in place of buttercups and violets, and is overwhelmed by one universal, melancholy, wet, dirty, fishy feeling, the sea is indeed the sea: a landsman's sea and a seamen's sea are far different elements; if such a complication of villainous properties can be called an element. To counterbalance all this, however, there are advantages which must not be forgotten; and thus good and evil, as we are told,

whether we believe it or not, are equipoised in this world below. The prime advantage is plainly this, that you are always doing two things at once, or you are carrying on the business of life in the usual way, and gain all the locomotion into the bargain: doubling that portion of your natural existence. If you eat you are going forwards, if you sleep you are going forwards, nay, if you go backwards you are going forwards. Not like that invention called a mail-coach, where you can neither eat nor sleep nor stand nor walk nor think nor see; where you are dusted and squeezed and elbowed and stewed and jolted and battered, with the risk of being carried off by wild horses, or of losing a wheel, or taking fire, or breaking an axle-tree. In the vessel, you can walk about, or sit on a stool or a locker, or stay in the cabin and read, or doze away your time like Chrononhotonthologos, or eat beef all day long, and go to bed without stopping the ship. Then you learn more of a man on board of a ship in a day, than you can discover on shore in a twelvemonth. It is not that you are packed more closely together and cannot escape. No, Sir, it all consists in changing your shirt. And that is the reason why the character of a sailor is so much more frank and open than that of a landsman.

Groping and feeling our way through the fog, making short boards, and wishing for a sight of the land which we knew to be near us, we stood in for Loch Duich; meaning to make any anchorage we could find, under the imperfect pilotage of our good Captain, and with the aid of Mackenzie's chart. But what is pilotage when you cannot see the bowsprit end, and what is the use of a chart in a fog. By the time we had got so well entangled in the extremity of Loch Alsh as to be in some doubt what was what, down came the fog from the east, rolling

like a huge featherbed, grey, thick, and solid, along the water. In a minute all was grey alike; and hill and valley, rocks and islets and promontories, were as if they had never been. The tide was setting out against us like a mill stream, or rather like half a dozen mill streams; and whether we were in this or that or the other, and what was Loch Duich or Loch Long, nobody knew. Fortunately the fog gave us all the same colour, and nobody could accuse his neighbour of looking greener than himself. It was not a time for jesting, however; and every eye was bent as if it would have pierced through the dense obscure with its own lightning. The old logicians disputed whether vision was performed by the action of the eye itself, "per emissionem," or "per receptionem specierum;" we should have been very thankful if the first hypothesis had been true. But no eye could penetrate this worse than Cimmerian darkness; while the ear informed us, to our no small alarm, that we were close on some shore, as we heard the breakers all around us. Let go the anchor was the cry; but the water was deep. We ran a knot into the shallows; but it was rocky, and the anchor could not have held in such a stream, which was running against our bows like a sluice, and which a fresh breeze just enabled us, fortunately, to stem. On a sudden, a spirt of wind blew off a few yards of fog; and behold, the first and only object we saw, was a cow within fifty yards of our quarter, with its tail stuck out in a horizontal position, as you have seen it in Wouvermans or Teniers. A comforting sight this; when, in another moment perhaps, we might have run our bowsprit through the body of a stot or a year-old. It was but a glimpse, however; and in a moment again all was darkness. In another instant we heard voices hailing—"what are you doing there;" and the

man at the lead called out, By the mark, three!—and a quarter, two!—two fat [illegible]! ground! They might well ask why we were sailing our ship among cows and green meadows; but the keel grated over the rocks, the long weeds that we had disturbed righted themselves once more along the stream, and in a minute we were in deep water.

It is the anchorage after all, said the Captain, though we have got in by a new road; the blood came back to all our cheeks, the cows and the men on shore discussed it together as they might, and "thinks I to myself," this is a very good joke now it is all over. I think, Captain, we will not try this anchorage again in a fog. Tut! said the Captain, it is always a fog in Sky.

It was late, as well as rainy and thick, when we came to anchor at night, and the cabin was therefore the best place on board. In the morning I was awakened by the singing of a thousand thrushes, as I had often been before; and this rural concert, strangely at variance with the narrow habitation which I occupied, was soon intermixed with the lowing of the cows and the song of the milk-maid, which I ungraciously mistook for a bagpipe. Going on deck, I found that we were at anchor in a small narrow creek, and almost touching the shore. A tall overhanging cliff, feathering down to the water with all its oak and birch, rose far above our mast; contrasting beautifully with our white sails, which were now spread to dry in the morning breeze. On each side, a high point ran out till it terminated in some flat rocks, against which the wave gently rippled as the tide ran by; while, on the very edge of the water, groups of ancient ash trees, in all the splendour of a June foliage, overshadowed the still green sea, which, like a mirror, reflected every branch, undisturbed by the light air that gently rustled

aloft in their leaves and in the rigging of our vessel. There was a soft and vernal feeling in the air, (for June is the May of Scotland,) and every leaf and flower seemed, as the poets say, to rejoice to the notes of the singing birds who were echoing each other among the thick green foliage that almost intermingled with our rigging. To be thus anchored in a grove amidst rural sounds and sights, produced a sense of delight, the more impressive from its contrast with all the rude noises of the winds and waves that we had just left: the loud blast of the mountain still sounding in the memory, and the white breakers foaming yet in the imagination as they had broke on the dark cliffs of Sky or roared past the bows.

It was not unusual to us to have thus passed a summer night; as most of the lochs and bays on the western coast are wooded to the water's edge, and as these woods are crowded with thrushes, who are never silent during those beautiful twilights of a calm June when the sun scarcely seems to set before it begins again to rise; creeping slowly beneath the margin of the northern horizon, and pursued by the sober gleam which succeeds its yellow departure, shortly growing to the crimson that marks its first appearance in the eastern sky. He who has not made this maritime tour, and at this beautiful season, can form no conception of the varied charms of the western coast, which, from the Mull of Cantyre throughout so long a space, presents one continued succession of picturesque and grand objects, in every variety that can be produced by bays, promontories, rocks, straits, and islands; by fertility contrasted to savage desolation, by wood and forest, lake, and river, and green meadow, by towering mountains and swelling hills, by the placid and silent calm succeeding to all the fury of a raging

ocean, by the dark tempest and the gale, the bright blue of the cloudless sky, and the evening and morning splendours of a lingering sun.

The beauty of the day was most favourable to an expedition up Loch Duich, which, like many other places, has no fame, because it has had no poet. Without being ever too wide to render uninteresting the scenery on both its margins, it extends for many miles inland; presenting a succession of scenes as pleasing as they are utterly different from those of any of the numerous inlets on this coast. The southern shore, for some miles, resembles more the luxuriant and ornamented grounds of an English park than the boundaries of a Highland sea loch; and were it not for the weeds that skirt the rocks at low water, and the occasional passage of a gull or a tern, it would be difficult to imagine that we were on a branch of the sea. As we proceeded up the southern shore, the green hills and meadows rose from the margin of the water, extending high up the hill, bright in all the luxuriant verdure of June, sprinkled with groups of cottages, and enlivened by the cattle that were straying along them; while others were wandering down to the shore to bathe themselves, or were standing in the sea in picturesque groups to avoid the flies. That which chiefly gives the character of design and of the efforts of wealth and taste to this spot, is the distribution of the trees along this verdant and lovely declivity. Nothing but the ash is seen; sometimes singly dispersed, at others collected in groups gradually uniting to the green surface by means of scattered trees, which soften and combine them in an endless variety that even the hand of taste might strive in vain to imitate. Full in foliage and picturesque in character as in the most favoured climates of England, they are also here often seen hanging over some bright

stream as it descends from the mountains, forming a group in some sequestered creek surrounded by rocks, and overshadowing the dark and smooth sea whose boundary they frequently conceal; or perched on some jutting low promontory, with their aged boughs gently bending down till they sweep the surface of the waves. Boats drawn up here and there under the lee of some rock, or at the mouth of a rivulet, add to the liveliness of a scene which is rendered more gay by the numerous population, engaged in their rural pursuits, or in launching their little skiffs to pursue the fishery.

The character of Loch Duich undergoes a complete change at its upper extremity, the place of the well-known inn of Ratachan; where the road from Fort Augustus to Sky is seen skirting the shores, till, ascending by a gradual and gentle sweep along the hills, it is lost to the eye. Here all is mountainous and wild; but there are few groups of hills so striking as those by which the long vista of this loch is terminated, from their combination and from the elegance and decision of their outlines. An open but irregular valley towards the north, leads into the wilds of Kintail, and into a country without other interest than that arising from its savage character. In descending along the northern shore, the aspect of the ground is completely changed. Rude land and rocky cliffs have taken the place of verdure and cultivation, yet the scene continues various and interesting. From the new road to Loch Alsh, which runs high along this margin, the views are more striking than from the level of the water, as is usually the case, yet it falls far short of the beauty of the southern side. Where Loch Long branches away from the common opening of these two inlets towards the north, and on an island at the angle, lies the castle of Eilan Dunan, the most ancient, or

the original possession of the Mackenzies, once Earls of Seaforth. This powerful family held Kintail as a grant from Alexander III, it is said, for their services at the battle of Largs: the story however, as, I believe, I have elsewhere remarked, seems to have been the invention of some genealogist. This castle is too far ruined to be a picturesque object, either from the form or the disposition of its parts; but the general effect of the mass of building is rendered extremely striking, by its insular position and by the nature of the surrounding scenery.

There is a scattered fishing village, called Dornie, on the edge of the narrow strait which here forms the immediate entrance to Loch Long; and the crowds of boats which were standing out into the bay in all directions, some rowing, others spreading their little sails to the evening breeze, produced a scene the more lively as it is not often seen on this coast, and as it was contrasted with the solitary aspect of the surrounding mountains, which were now beginning to catch the last rays of the setting sun. A strong tide hurried us through the strait; and as we entered the loch, enclosed on both sides by the high hills that rose abruptly from each shore of this very narrow inlet, twilight settled grey and sober all round, though the red rays were still seen gilding the tops of the sharp mountains that rose in the distance. The breeze seemed to have sunk to rest, but the water carried us on rapidly, scarcely indicating, by a few bright streaming lines that rippled on its glassy surface, the motion of the tide which impelled us along. Even this slight appearance of a tide vanished as we arrived at a narrower part, where the cliffs rose perpendicularly from the water, which, deep and black, seemed to rest without motion at their feet, as in the abyss of some subterranean cavern. The profound silence was undisturbed even by

a ripple or the sound of a breeze, and the long grass hung unmoved from the crevices of the rocks, darkly reflected in the black and polished mirror below. Every thing seemed at rest, the sail hung idle against the mast, a leaf that had fallen from the birches which feathered from the cliffs above, lay quietly by our side, and not a a bubble or a wave rose to disturb the repose in which we seemed to lie, fixed on the dark and still surface. Yet the cliffs passed rapidly by, the trees were left behind, and it was with a feeling of fearful awe that we found ourselves shot along with the velocity of an arrow into the open and bright water, as if impelled by some magical power, like the bark of Dante, angel-borne.

The scenery at the head of this inlet is mountainous, yet open. It may be more picturesque than it appeared to me: but after a day thus spent, it is impossible to form a fair judgment of the beauties of such scenes. There are few efforts which more fatigue the mind. A storm may perhaps excite that attention which has sunk into listlessness during the repose of a tranquil day; or the rude mountain, the torrent and the precipice, may still have charms for him whose feelings have become impassive to gentler nature: but he hopes vainly who hopes that he can contemplate the setting sun with the same fresh and vivid impressions that he witnessed its rising. It was long past twilight when we approached our vessel. A thin wreath of blue smoke rising against the dark wooded face of the hill under which she lay, directed us to her place. She seemed anchored in the middle of the woods, and with hesitation we pulled into the water that surrounded her, shadowy and dark as the cliffs that overhung it, and only rendered visible by the bright line which followed every stroke of the oar, and by the twinkling of the submarine lights which their motion

had disturbed. A solitary thrush made the echoes resound to his plaintive notes; but all else was silence and repose.

The navigation from Loch Alsh to Loch Carron is very interesting; but I shall pass it over at present, as it belongs more properly to the history of Sky: thus keeping the account of the islands as separate from that of the mainland as is possible. Though this description has been thrown into that continuous form which may render it most convenient to the traveller who may choose to follow me, the examination was the result of more than one season. You must not therefore be surprised to find that June is suddenly turned into September on your hands, or that some other hypallages should occur, from the same cause; "Si regressum feci metro, Retro ante, ante retro."

The entrance to the anchorage of Loch Carron is rendered difficult by rocks, and it was not without striking twice that we got into it. I was somewhat surprised to find that we were near a considerable village, as Highland villages are; expecting to see nothing but scattered houses along the northern shore, just as from the Mull of Cantyre to Glen Elg. But so little is known of this remote country beyond its immediate limits, that a distant visitor need not be much mortified at his ignorance: its pains also, will be generally compensated by its pleasures. If he runs himself into dangers by attempting a harbour of which he is ignorant, he will make up for it on some other occasion by discovering one that is unknown; and if, trusting to the map and expecting a town, he only finds half a dozen black houses, he will sometimes meet a real village, as on the present occasion, where he expected nothing but barren hills and a deserted rocky coast. It is almost ludicrous to reflect that a voyage

through these western seas, the seas of Britain, maritime Britain, the Queen of the ocean, should so often resemble an expedition of discovery on the coasts of New Holland or northern Asia.

You must excuse me if I cannot give an account of the foundation, the police, the politics, or the scandal of Plockton. It would be fully as easy to acquire such information in Congo or Ashantee, and there would be less danger of detection in case of error. I can only conclude, from the number of fishing boats, that the inhabitants are active fishermen, and, from the surrounding cultivation, that, as usual, they combine fishing with agriculture. The presence of some slated houses, appeared to indicate a state of comparative wealth not often found along these shores.

The following morning was dedicated to the circumnavigation of Loch Carron; a wide and spacious inlet, bounded on all hands by mountains, but not affording any striking scenery. The shores are generally low; and though there is a good deal of cultivation, there is no wood; or at least not enough to produce any effect in the landscape. There is a considerable village on the northern shore, called Jean Town; newly built, and consisting of good slated houses. It appeared populous, and, being clean and orderly, is probably a thriving and useful establishment. The difficulty of forming towns or villages in the Highlands, would render it desirable to trace the origin and history of the whole of these; since useful hints might be derived from those which appear to have succeeded. But the inhabitants can give no information, they are not mentioned in books, the proprietors are rarely accessible to a casual traveller, and mere conjecture can serve little purpose. This one, which belongs to Applecross, seemed to be arranged under a

system of leases and an extent of tenements larger than is usual in this country. When the herrings frequented this coast, all the villages of this description had probably been comparatively opulent; and I believe I am correct in stating that this circumstance was the origin of the whole. With the desertion of this fish, they have evidently declined; but such are its caprices, that they may again in no long time recover their former value.

The narrow entrance which opens on the wide expanse of Loch Carron, if not picturesque, is at least striking. It is skirted by alluvial terraces, which mark the former flow of the river at a much higher level than that of the present sea. These lead to the important conclusion that this was once a fresh water lake; and that its sea boundary having been lowered in the progress of time, by the action of the issuing stream, it has at length admitted the salt water. The explanation is too abstruse to be given here: but similar revolutions are not uncommon on this coast; and, in some cases, the reverse has happened; a sea loch having been converted into a fresh water lake by the gradual deposit of earth at its narrow entrance.

The shores of Loch Kishorn, which branches northward from the joint entrance of both, are barren, rude, and deserted; everywhere bounded by brown and stony mountains of a rapid acclivity, but without beauty or any other interest than that derived from their air of savage wildness. But the constant recurrence of rocks and islands, of creeks and headlands, which, among so many winds and tides, renders the management of a boat so intricate, produces in itself an amusement, and excites an interest which an unoccupied spectator would not feel.

Our vessel lay in a beautiful rocky creek, over which rose a picturesque and wooded hill; and an evening's

walk detected a variety of green glades, recesses, and retired hollows among the rocks, which made amends for the want of beauty in the wider scenes of Loch Carron itself. There are few more beautiful spots along this shore, and scarcely any to which the hand of taste could have made fewer additions. But so it is in a thousand places throughout this coast, where Nature has been lavish of beauties that seem destined to be for ever secluded from admiration or use.

But the pleasures of this evening walk were much abated by a scene, of which, unfortunately, too many are to be met with in the Highlands. Close on the margin of the shore, on a spot of waste green, was a hut, built of open wicker work; pervious to all the winds, and ill protected from the rain by an imperfect covering of turf. On entering it, we found a poor woman cooking some shell fish over a peat fire, attended by two children. On the floor, scarcely covered by a wretched supply of blankets, lay the husband, sick, of a fever as we were informed; but, except this bedding and the cooking apparatus, there did not seem to be an article of furniture in the hut. In England, were such a thing possible, a spectator would have been much more affected with such a display of wretchedness; but here, he becomes not only accustomed to it, but is also aware that the condition of these poor people is not so very widely different as it seems to be, from that which, however miserable to the eyes of a stranger, is, in this country, the usual state of life. Accordingly, they seemed to bear it with patience, as part of the common order of things; making no complaints, and asking neither for pity nor relief. For myself, I must however own, that it gave me much greater pain than ordinary complaining misery ever did in any situation; and perhaps for this very reason, that it was attended

by no complaints. Why the sight of that misery which is insensible to its own wretchedness, should be more painful than that of suffering united to the bitter consciousness of it, is not very difficult to explain. In contemplating the individual, we are struck with reflecting on what must have been endured before it could have produced such insensibility; or, when we see that such things are borne as if they were the necessary condition of human life, we sicken at reflecting that its situations should be so unequal. But, after all, we ought to console ourselves, as far as we can, by recollecting that this very insensibility is a palliation, at least, if not a blessing. We found, on enquiry, that, having been ejected from their farm, and having no other resource, they had been suffered by a neighbouring farmer to build their hut from his woods and to graze their only cow upon his waste; and thus, with the assistance of the shell fish which they caught at low water, and some casual labour, they had contrived to live through that portion of the summer which was past. How the winter was to be surmounted, it was both too easy and too painful to imagine.

I have not drawn this wretched picture for the purpose of writing two or three pathetic sentences, still less for that of giving you pain; but because such facts have been noticed by travellers, or rather, noticed by one and transcribed by others, as if they were common, and as if they gave a general notion of this country, in many, if not in most, places. They are, on the contrary, rare; yet, notwithstanding the general humanity of the proprietors, it is difficult to see how such misfortunes are to be always avoided. In the reforms of land for the purpose of crofting, on the new system, the ejected tenants have generally been provided with new farms on the sea shores. Yet instances do and must occur, where a proprietor has no

land to distribute; and, in such a case, where, from poverty or other causes, the people can neither migrate nor emigrate, similar consequences are inevitable. I would not willingly suppose that, in the present or in any other instance, the proprietor had been insensible to the claims of humanity. It is easy to censure, and it has never been found difficult to be charitable at the expense of others; but as long as the present state of the Highlands shall continue, nothing less than the extension of a charity which must ultimately absorb the whole estates of the proprietors, could remove or prevent this occasional evil. That state is, I believe, beyond a certain point, unalterable; and we must, perhaps, be content to look on the present and on many other similar instances, as part of that system of necessary evils from which neither human nature nor political societies can ever be exempt, however it may be our duty to alleviate them as far as lies in our power. But I will not at present dwell on a subject which is but too likely to meet us again in some other shape in this country.

There is a channel between the Croulin islands and Loch Toskig, as there is between the former and Sky. These islands are uninteresting, and Loch Toskig is even duller than Loch Kishorn. With the single exception of Applecross House, the same is true of the whole shore as far as Loch Torridon, and, I may as well add, to Gairloch and to Loch Ewe, and so northwards, wherever the red sandstone extends. The general character of the whole, is an uniform smoothness and insipidity of outline; without irregularities on the sky, and without intricacy on the sea shore. If there are promontories, they have no character, and the bays and creeks are without variety or ornament; every point being like every other, and the whole a chilling and barren sight. When there are cliffs,

they are square and smooth; and if there is a torrent, it runs in a naked formal channel, without wood, and without any circumstance to give it interest. Not a tree or a shrub is indeed any where to be seen along this coast; but the whole presents one brown, barren, and arid surface, as dry in the aspect of the vegetation as it is in the outline; while the disagreeable red and brown colour of the rocks adds to the deformity, as it does to the general aspect of desolation. Such beauty as there may be in this sandstone country, occurs incidentally when the cliffs happen to be unusually lofty, or where there are detached columns or stacks; the magnitude, in these cases, making amends for the formality, which indeed, when on a great scale, is in itself far from offensive. Some beauty will also be found in it, in the deep lochs; but it is remarkable how rapidly that beauty is improved, and how decided the change in the character of the scenery is, the moment that the sandstone is replaced by gneiss.

It is thus that geology, when it quits the trammels of its disputes and its theories, and puts aside its jargon and its trifling, illustrates even the pursuits of the artist. As far as landscape depends on forms, it will be found that it is very often essentially regulated, as to its beauty or deformity as well as its character, by the nature of the rocks of which a country consists. And this is often true, even where the rocks are not visible; as the character of the surface, the outlines of the hills, the forms of the shores, and many other circumstances, depend on the geological nature and disposition of the rocks beneath. Nor is even the aspect of a cultivated country, where all form is either originally absent, or obscured by vegetation and improvement, so independent of the nature of the subjacent rocks as might be imagined. So far from it, many districts of England, and some even in Scotland,

have a character in their vegetating surface, if it may so be called, so marked, as not only to indicate the nature of the rocks beneath, but to enable a practised eye to decide where one kind terminates and another begins.

But where the rocks are exposed, the characters of the landscape, as these are affected by their differences, are still more marked; and it is then also more easy to trace the connexion between the causes and the effects. On the coast which has given rise to these remarks, this is very conspicuous; an entire and sudden change of character always occurring whenever gneiss succeeds to sandstone, or the reverse. In Sky, it is exemplified much more remarkably, because the rocks are more numerous; and thus the landscape characters, or the physiognomy, of Sleat, of Strathaird, of the north-east coast, of the mountains near Broadford, of the western shore, and of the Cuchullin hills, will all be found to be regulated by the different nature of their rocks. In Staffa, and in other cases of columnar rocks, the connexion beween the cause and the effect is too obvious to need a remark. But, in Morven, where the trap is not columnar, the difference of the landscape, in that portion which is formed of gneiss and in that which consists of trap, is as marked as it is, on this coast, between the former rock and the sandstone; as is also the case in Airdnamurchan. The shores of Cantyre are indebted for their extraordinary beauty to their schistose rocks; as those of Applecross are to the sandstone for their deformity. Thus also Arran, like Sky, displays as many varieties of landscape character as it possesses rocks; from the spiry forms of its granite to the insipidity of its porphyries and its schists, and from the intricacies of its stratified cliffs to the almost artificial regularity of its columnar precipices. Bute presents no less remarkable a contrast

at its northern and southern extremities, between its trap and its schists; as do the Cumbrays to the opposed coast of Argyllshire. But I might illustrate this by examples almost without end; in Perthshire, in Caithness, in Tweedale, in Aberdeenshire, in short, in every part of Scotland. To exemplify it thus, would be to write a book; but I cannot help pointing out to you, as familiar objects, our own scenery of Roslin, determined by the characters of its sandstone, Dovedale and Craven by those of their limestone, the country including Staffordshire as compared to that round Dunstable, where the distinction is merely agricultural yet striking, and, as an example which, I fear, neither you nor I know but by drawings, Pola in Istria; a limestone country, like Dovedale, but of infinitely superior variety and grandeur.

I dare not however proceed as I might wish, and forget that my business is to describe Loch Torridon; but I cannot part with this subject, without suggesting how necessary the knowledge of rocks is to the landscape painter; not only that he may preserve character and truth in his representations of mere rocks, but that he may avoid those incongruities of general aspect, which do not interfere with the truth of portraiture or the consistency of style alone, but which offend the eye. Nor is it only the eye of the geologist which is thus offended; for in almost every representation of nature, the uneducated and the unscientific detect, by something like instinct, faults and inconsistencies, the nature of which they cannot explain; or rather, perhaps, they merely feel that something is wrong, when they know not what that something is. It is not very easy to refer, in detail, to the faults and oversights of artists in this particular; because there are not many of their works so universally known as to form legitimate or convenient

objects of reference. But it would be much easier to point out instances of right than wrong, because these are so extremely rare; while I may also add, that when landscape painters have been faultless in this particular, it has arisen, rather from what may be called the accident of their having painted from nature, carefully, and in the open air, than from correct general knowledge of the natural history, or anatomy, of their landscape.

Thus, Salvator is beautifully correct in his fine picture of the Preaching of John the Baptist; a landscape evidently painted from the life: but, to compensate that, he is wrong twenty times, even where he seems equally to have painted from nature; and evidently from want of scientific knowledge in this particular department. Nor is it possible to contemplate that picture, without being aware of the value which it derives from its truth. Thus also in his magnificent composition of the Golden Calf, Claude has treated his rocks with as much truth as effect. Yet even with him, the careful painter of nature, that perfection in this department of landscape is rare; a proof of the necessity which a landscape painter is under, of knowing the anatomy, if I may again use such a term, of his rocks, as well as of his trees, his plants, his shipping, his architecture, and his animals. Of both the Poussins, and of Nicolo chiefly, I may say what Peter Pindar says of many landscape painters, that their's are too often garret rocks, though sometimes marked by truth; and if Gainsborough's are like nothing on earth, it is no cause of surprise, when we know from what materials he constructed, at least his last style of landscape. I might illustrate this without end, for good and for bad, but chiefly the latter, from painters without number; from Berghem, Du Jardin, Ruysdael, Wilson, Rubens, Turner, and many others, but it is unnecessary. I do not say

that landscape painters ought to study the Huttonian theory, or learn to distinguish between greenstone and basalt; but I must maintain that until they are familiar with the leading rocks of the earth and their characteristic differences, their works will be imperfect. To represent her correctly, Nature must be known, "intus et in cute;" and it is as vain to hope for truth in this department of art, without knowledge, as to expect to paint a horse or a man justly, without being acquainted with their anatomy. I know of no place where, from want of this species of knowledge, artists have so invariably failed as in their attempts to represent Staffa; nor is there any class of rocks, to the right representation of which, minute geological knowledge is so indispensable as the columnar ones. No artist, be his eye, his practice, and his patience what they may, can draw these rocks from nature, merely by copying what is before him; particularly in that case where they form causeways, so dazzling is their intricacy, and so inextricable their forms. If he attempts to construct them, without the requisite knowledge, all truth of character, as well as all possibility of right position and relation, disappear; and the drawings assume that hideous air of regularity and falsity together, which we see in every drawing of that place which has been made. But I must have done; satisfied, not with having given landscape painters a wipe of my pen, but with reflecting that if they will take these things to heart, they will profit by them. All the arts and sciences mutually aid each other: to a painter's necessary knowledge I know of no limits; and even geology, I trust, may be rescued from some portion of the contempt which the crowd of its miserable cultivators has brought on it, when it shall have been raised to the dignity of a handmaid to the arts of design.

Loch Torridon is the most spacious and noble inlet on the whole west coast; equalling, in dimensions, Loch Hourn and Loch Nevis united. It is impossible to avoid being struck by its extent and its grandeur, and yet it is almost in vain that we search for picturesque beauty. I examined it in all ways, circumnavigated it, and, in a beautiful day, turned it over and over in my mind twenty times, and regretted when the time came to leave it; and yet I could never find a picture in it, nor explain to myself what it was which rendered it so attractive. Thus it must remain for others to analyze and appreciate more justly; while probably the fault was in myself; in a mind and an eye full, almost to satiety, with the scenes that had engaged me for weeks, and as fastidious, possibly, as weary. Or "perhaps the man had changed his mind; was sick, in love, or had not dined."

This loch is divided, very decidedly, into two equal portions; and the innermost is divided also, in an equally marked manner, into two, of which the first is called Loch Achrakin. The outermost division, which is so wide as to be almost a bay, is by much the least interesting, being formed of the sandstone already mentioned. There is here, on a neck of land at the bottom of this bay, a village of some note, with a large establishment of houses for the fisheries. This is one of those expensive foundations which, like Tanera, was undertaken during the herring mania of former days. A large capital was thus sunk, in preparing, not in acting; cramping the future efforts of the subscribers, and disgusting and terrifying them at the same time; while no sooner were they ready to act, than the fish began to desert and have long since disappeared. Common prudence should have directed them to enquire whether there were reasons for justifying the sinking of so much capital; nor would there

have been any difficulty in discovering, from former experience, that the constancy of the herring was not to be trusted. I know not whether Pennant's absurd and visionary theory of the migrations of the herrings had any influence, or if he had promulgated it at this time: but it is easy to see how important natural history may prove, even in the weighty matters of commerce, when a true theory of the herring would have saved all this disappointment and expense, as a false one has produced this loss. A cod fishery is, however, carried on here; so that all that has been done is not absolutely wasted.

After passing this village and the narrow channel formed between two advancing points, we enter the large basin of Loch Achrakin, much more interesting; beyond which a second strait introduces us to the inner loch, a magnificent piece of water capable of holding a fleet. The little picturesque beauty on the shores, is found in that portion of the gneiss rock which divides the two basins; and it must be sought in the same manner in the outer loch; while the remainder, formed of the sandstone, displays the usual tameness. But, from different elevated points along the margin, there are some very fine and extensive mountain views, particularly towards the south; including the bold group of hills towards Loch Kishorn and Loch Carron, with the details of an inland lake, Loch Taniff, which adds much to the brilliancy of the effect. To the eastward, is a scene of universal mountain; the wildest part perhaps of all Scotland, at least of such an extent; being the great district included within a line drawn from Ullapool or Loch Inver, round by Dingwall to Glen Elg.

There is nothing worthy of notice between Loch Torridon and Gairloch; but this inlet possesses considerable beauty in various parts, and more particularly in that

angle occupied by Flowerdale. The very unexpected ornament of this place, contrasted also as it is with all the surrounding wildness, almost carries us back to the most polished regions of Perthshire. It is an interesting spot, independently of its beauty; as proving that nothing is wanting but taste and industry, to render a thousand places on the west coast, rivals to the most ornamental parts of the interior of Scotland: qualities which may exist in many persons besides Sir Hector Mackenzie, but which are wasted if the proprietors do not reside on their estates. Had there been as many Sir Hector Mackenzies as there are spots equal in capacity to Gairloch, the west coast of Scotland might have challenged any equal space in the world for judicious ornament, embellishing and improving Nature, as it now may for natural advantages. This, however, can never happen; because it is precluded by the extensive tracts which lie in the hands of the very limited number of proprietors; who have thus a monopoly of beauty which they cannot use if they would; as well as by many other obvious circumstances which it would be superfluous to notice.

POL EWE, LOCH EWE, GARDENING, LOCH MAREE.

During three days we had been becalmed on the coast, anxious enough to proceed, but bearing our imprisonment with exemplary patience. In truth, I believe it is not very easy to be angry in a calm; however perverse the occurrence may be, and however provoking the consequences. The mind takes the complexion of the elements, and falls into a gentle and dreaming kind of acquiescence; thinking nothing of the future, and scarcely knowing whether it is even thinking of the present. The sea stands still; the winds stand still; time seems to stand still; our ideas stand still; and why should we be at the trouble of setting them a going when the great enemy is at rest. Besides, to stir up an intestine and pitiful storm in our own miserable wash-hand basins, serves no purpose, when Neptune chooses to snore, or to amuse himself with the Mermaids as they "sit on diamond rocks, smoothing their soft alluring locks." Every tide indeed that went by to the northward, swept us ten miles nearer to our port; but the next six hours brought us back to the same spot; oscillating like a pendulum, and unable to help ourselves, as the water was far too deep to anchor. Never was calm more still and dead: all nature was at rest. A whitish haze covered the blue sky, softening the brightness of the sun; but there was not a cloud to move. Not the slightest heave or undulation could be seen on the water:

the very line of the horizon was invisible; and while the sea reflected the sky, and reflected nothing else, we seemed to be suspended in empty space. The vessel herself appeared, like universal nature, to be dead. The vane stirred not; and the pendant, fallen across the gaff, trailed down towards the deck among the folds of the mainsail, which, like the rest, hung idle from the mast and rigging. Not a ripple or a bubble moved round the rudder; Thetis might have walked on the water without wetting her "tinsel-slippered feet;" the very gulls had departed and left us alone in the world: gone to seek for kinder zephyrs elsewhere, to fan their airy wings.

But at length the third day had arrived; and having long ceased to think, we now ceased to talk: the Captain became grave, and the men shunned each other; and while one leaned over the head rail, another sat on the windlass with his head between his knees, and a third amused himself with solitary contemplation on the ragged knees of his trowsers. I had at last read Shakspeare over and over, even to the dregs of Titus Andronicus, and there was nothing to do but to look at the languid sea, to whistle for a wind, (whence unquestionably the saying, go whistle,) or to read the whole art of Gauging made easy. "Had I fed on the dainties that are bred in a book, had I eaten paper, as it were, and drank ink," to be reduced in these latter days to the exciseman's manual. And at length the main boom began to be uneasy; not knowing where to rest or what to do but for its guy; while the idle helm wandered up and down complaining, and the sails dangled and flapped, and the sea became greasy, and the cabbage leaves floated along side, and hour after hour of the *day* was expended in doing nothing, while "the spirits of the winds sat above in the clouds and mocked us." Oh, I

could have said, with Doll Tearsheet, I am sick of these calms. This is the very night-mare of the ocean; but it teaches us patience, if it lasts long enough. I do not wish to detract from the merit of those who emulate Job. But it is easy to be patient under eternal and uniform disappointment. It is that vile mixture of small doses of prosperity which spoils us all. If this calm had lasted till now, we should doubtless have been quiet enough: but we had been spoiled "nurslings of the storm," as we were, by fresh gales and reefed mainsails, accustomed to seek our lullaby in the loud rocking of the piping winds, and to "peep from our cabined loopholes" at seas of foam and fire.

The third evening had now closed around us, when a long trailing line of black smoke in the horizon announced a steam-boat. She was soon up with us; and as she shot along under our stern, as if in contempt, our sails shook once more, and we rolled on the waves which departed on each side from her wake, disturbing the repose of the evening sea. The rippling streams diverged from her like rivers, as she stood on to the northward; and the long column of smoke, diminishing to a point as she left us, spread over the clear sky, long remaining to mark the line of her fiery transit. The contrast was too great to be endured: it disturbed our patience; and two boats being put a-head, with the aid of a rising air and the tide, we reached Loch Ewe.

This is a deep and not a very wide inlet. The form of the land on each side is tame; and it is only at the extremity, where the high mountains of the interior come into view, that the outline has any character. But the view of Pol Ewe from the anchorage is picturesque; as the finely characterised mountains which surround Loch Maree form its conspicuous features. The rocky hills that

surround this rude and strange valley are singularly wild. From Loch Maree, scarcely a mile distant from the sea shore, the Ewe, a broad river, runs with a rapid course to the sea. Issuing from the lake, it first meanders gently through low grounds interspersed with wild groves of alder and birch and oak, enclosed by woody cliffs and irregular rough ground, which, on both hands, rise up the intricate skirts of the high mountains that bound the lake and the valley together. Shortly, however, it is seen roaring through a steep and stony channel, deep below the surrounding land, which is now a rude heathy moor, with occasional patches of corn near the margin of the water. Hence passing a salmon weir, the river forms a considerable cascade, falling into a dark rocky pool; immediately after which it joins the sea.

The peculiar wildness of this valley is rendered more impressive by the crowded population, for which, considering its aspect, it is remarkable. We think little, in this country, of deserted and solitary rudeness and barrenness, since they are of such daily and incessant recurrence: but when inhabited, they impress us forcibly, and, apparently, from an unacknowledged sympathy with those whose lot it is to reside in them. Besides the small tenants who occupy the numerous black houses about this waste, and whose peat stacks are even more conspicuous than their dwellings, there is here a large farm house, a slated inn, which is also the post-office, and a salmon fishery. From the post-office there is a weekly packet to Stornaway; so that Pol Ewe reminds us of that world, of which, in a few weeks cruising about these seas, we are very apt to lose sight. The river is noted, both for the abundance and the goodness of its salmon, and is rented by Berwick fishermen; the produce, here and

elsewhere on this coast, being carried across the country on horseback to the Murray Frith to be boiled for the London market: an arrangement which does not appear the best that could be devised, as it is a journey of two days. The river abounds equally in trout, as does also Loch Maree; so that, for brothers of the angle as well as for trading Berwickers, Pol Ewe is one of the most enticing places on the west coast. I know not even if it is exceeded by Laxford; but I beg to caution you against believing any thing which I may say of the piscatory art, as I never could comprehend its sublime mysteries, though I have read Isaac five times.

If ever you have been condemned for a month, in your character of commissioner of lighthouses, to fish, and salt beef, and mutton, and mutton, and salt beef, and fish, again and again, with biscuit alone, or with potatoes half the time and an empty bag for the remainder, you know what it is to have longed for something green to munch, and to have envied a taylor in August, or even a rabbit. "Si bene qui cænat, bene vivit," no one need live worse than I have lived in Sutherland, on boiled salmon and oat cakes, and on nothing but boiled salmon and oat cakes, for weeks, at breakfast, dinner, and supper: he who has tried it, will long for the diet of Nebuchadnezzar. I had often, however, found occasional substitutes when at sea, by worshipping a little Vertumnus of my own. This was the greatest advantage I ever derived from the study of stamens and pistils, and of polygamy, whether necessary or superfluous; and from learning by heart five or six thousand pentandrian monogynian names, and changing two or three dozen of them once a month, whenever the revolutions of fashion in this science, as it is by especial favour called, demanded it. But how should we be learned else: if we did not keep that Gran Bestia

the Volgo at a due distance by all these contrivances. The men first wondered and stared, and then doubted; but when at last they found that we of the cabin did not die of eating weeds, all the shrouds and stays were soon hung with bunches of plants, emulating the paradise of Covent Garden; and the kale of the galley, which, before, had looked like barley swimming in soap and water spangled with liquid grease, assumed a verdant aspect. Wild thyme, in particular, was soon in constant demand; and when the boat was now borrowed by the men, to go on shore, we knew that it would return with a truss in the stern sheets that would have maintained a cow for two days. A fortunate discovery which I made of some Allium ursinum, (wild garlick,) gave zest for a week to our hashed mutton and our insipid broth. The sea beet and the Crambe maritima served for ordinary greens, and sorrel was always at hand for a fricandeau a l'oseille. The Cotyledon luteum, very unexpectedly, proved to be a good substitute for spinach; but, best of all and most abundant, were the Chenopodia, common on all these shores, which ensured us a never-failing supply. Thus I gained immortal fame in the eyes of Duncan, the greasy cook. I give you the botanical names, lest you should doubt my learning. It is a fine thing to be learned; or to pass for it, which does as well; and lest you should not know the way, my good Sir Walter, I must refer you to Mr. — never mind who—" for weel he kenn'd the way O;" or inform you myself: as thus. If you wish to appear scientific about a cabbage, you turn up Donn's catalogue, voce cabbage, where you find Brassica oleracea. Write that down: but never hint at the base English. Only, if it should be a dwarfish birch that you want, take care you do not mistake it for dwarf birch, and so write Betula nana. That would be unlucky. If

you treat of base cod, or baser herring, look into Pennant or Berkenhout, and stultify your audience with the sonorous and resonant names of Gadus morhua and Clupea harengus. "It is as easy as lying"—only "take care you govern the ventiges well," lest some false sound escape you and betray the jackdaw. If any cynical critic should find you out and say "that's villainous, and shows a most pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it," mind him not: you will have the ladies and the mob on your side.

Nevertheless, our supplies were, for the present, exhausted: and the sight of the inn with its enclosed garden, held out promise of cabbage, and leeks, and many other sweets. There was a garden, however, not because the innkeeper was addicted, like Diocletian, either to gardening or to eating cabbage, but because the sensible proprietor who had built a good house for this purpose, thought it a proper or necessary appendage. It very soon proved that Mr. Mackenzie was of a different opinion; and his opinion was really of some political importance in this question; because, besides being post-master, farmer, and inn-keeper, he was a reading man and a sensible well-bred man; a specimen of what I believe to be now the very best and purest class among the Highlanders; as far removed from those evils which the poverty of the lower people produces, as from that train of manners and opinions which belongs to those who, from Lowland education and habits, have almost ceased to be Highlanders except in name.

The first thing that met my eye, was an enclosure in decay, and a gate, of which nothing remained but the lowest bar, creaking on its rusty and solitary hinge. Such a sight promised little for the inside, which comprised about a rood of land. It was not very easy to

enter; nor, when in it, was there any trace of walk or of beds, or any inducement to walk in one direction rather than another. Something that appeared to have been once intended for an apple tree, hung over the enclosure; and a solitary rose bush, deeply buried in long grass, seemed to have been in vain labouring to produce two or three buds; but to expand them was impossible. From beneath a heap of stones and rubbish that had fallen down from the dyke, some plants of parsley were attempting to make their appearance; the remainder of the bed, not so well protected, having vanished. A little further on, a huge elecampane had fairly beaten the nettles which had striven with it for supremacy; lifting its golden crest above them, like Achilles among the Trojan mob, and forming the prime object in the garden. One plant of rue had secured itself in a corner from the intrusion of other vegetable interference; its taste ensuring it from all other attacks; while a row of woody roots near it, just sticking out of the ground in irregular bunches, seemed to indicate what, in times past, had been thyme. Some currant and gooseberry bushes bore leaves and prickles, very properly; and amid a splendid crop of groundsel, chickweed, and docks, intermixed with grass and an occasional thistle, were seen two potatoe plants, and seven stumps, bearing just leaves enough to prove that they had once been cabbages. The remains of a row of rotten sticks had probably belonged to some project of pease in the days of former years. Considering that three or four pigs were wandering about before the door, the presence even of the cabbage stumps was unexpected; but the Epicurean beasts scorned to enter it, and grunted contempt at the open gateway. With all this, Mr. Mackenzie had a wife and seven children, for whom a rood of land might, with very little

labour, have produced variety of comforts, though the passengers who frequented his inn had been indifferent to them. As to himself, three fourths of his time were spent in lounging about on the green before his door, for want of employment; and his elder children, who, well directed, would have found amusement in rendering this spot of ground useful, followed the paternal example. That the sluggard had once enjoyed some produce, was evident from what remained. If he could so easily resign it because he could not be fashed to take his hands out of his breeches pockets, if even a ready-made garden put into those hands could not tempt him to keep it up, we need not be surprised that no Highlander ever thinks of making a garden for himself.

If, as we are told, the Highlanders borrowed their kilt from the Romans, it is unlucky that they did not borrow, at the same time, a little of their love of gardens. The Lentuli, Fabii, and Cicerones, might have taught them some more useful knowledge than exposing their hurdies to Highland breezes. If Mr. Mackenzie had been condemned to breakfast for a twelvemonth on that amiable dish in Virgil's Culex, it would have been of vast service to him. At present, he would have been sadly out of his element had he been condemned to sup with Horace or Plato. Charlemagne would have taught him, not only to eat his cabbages, but to make money of his rood of land, by selling to us and to other ships, what we would gladly have purchased with gold. It is a great pity that when the Imperial Gardener was making that treaty with King Achaius, he had not inserted a clause out of his own Capitularies to compel his Highland allies, as well as his own subjects, to plant fruit-trees and "sow small salading."

Every one, doubtless, and "my man of instances" above all, will be in haste to produce some individual

facts from his own knowledge, to controvert an assertion that is far from flattering. So could I myself; yet these exceptions are found, as is usual in parallel cases, on the borders of the Lowlands, or in the hands of gentlemen of education, or in those of low country tenants, or under some peculiar circumstances of accident, without affecting the general principle. Except in such, I can venture to say that there is not a garden from Barra Head to the Butt of the Lewis, nor from the Mull of Cantyre to Cape Rath. I can most truly assure you that I never saw such a thing, nor even a culinary vegetable of any kind. You might as well seek for a mangosteen as for an onion, a leek, a turnip, or even a cabbage. Whether the Gaelic language has names for such objects, I know not, but the articles themselves are utterly unknown; and I will produce you ten thousand Highlanders who never saw either. When an Englishman hears of Scotch kale and reads songs about cauld kale, and is asked to sup his kale, he is apt to imagine that he is arrived in a land of cabbages. Even with respect to the low country, there is more cabbage in one English cottage establishment, than in ten of their kale yards: in the Highlands, "stat nominis umbra." It must be supposed that broth did once really contain cabbage; whence the term kale continues to be applied, by courtesy, to a mixture of barley and water, or, under circumstances of peculiar wealth, to the same solution with a few scraps of something green, as large as a thumb-nail, swimming about "in gurgite vasto." I once supposed that the poor little people in the Highlands had never heard of gardens and vegetables, and that they might therefore be taught to mend their diet and increase their comforts. But many more examples than this of Pol Ewe demolished my theory.

It seems odd that reformers like us are always angry

because we cannot persuade people to be happy in our way instead of their own. Yet, odd as it may be, it is difficult to avoid a feeling of vexation at such neglect as that of this Pol Ewe gentleman, or at seeing the number of poor creatures who are often not able to command even potatoes or bread to their fish, who, at the best, are tied down to an unvarying round of miserable diet, who are often suffering from diseases in consequence of the want of green vegetables, and who, at the same time, by three days' labour in the year, might ensure themselves, without any other expense, an ample supply of articles, equally wholesome, profitable, and agreeable. Where kitchen gardens are cultivated in this country, nothing can exceed the produce, in goodness; so that the climate offers no objection. The inhabitants of St. Kilda, whose food is of a gross animal nature, suffer especially from this neglect; as do the people in Barra, Canna, and many other places, where the diet is chiefly fish, and the supply of meal and potatoes scanty. The medicinal powers of green vegetables, in this case, are so far superior to those of these substances, that a very small kale-yard would remedy all the evil effects. This is fully experienced by the people of Shetland and Orkney; to whom, as you have yourself witnessed, cabbage is as necessary as it is an universal article of diet: and however strange the combination of fish and cabbage may be to those unused to it, the utility of this vegetable in preventing the bad effects of a mere fish diet, are most obvious. I must continue to think, that those who may have influence enough to introduce a system of cottage gardening among the Highlanders, and chiefly among the maritime ones, will confer on them one of the greatest benefits which they can receive, among the very few that are really practicable. To expose such a defect, in

hopes of a remedy, is, I hope, laudable: remaining unknown, it is not likely to be amended.

That even their betters in this country have paid little attention to this subject, is also but too true. It is certain that the very introduction of gardens is modern, and that the country was indebted for it to a few gentlemen of superior education and views. Boswell, only fifty years ago, expresses his surprise that Coryattachan, then a large proprietor in Sky and the head of an ancient family, had no garden. Places of not much less note may yet be pointed out, where this is still almost the case; and even where there is a spot of land appropriated to this object, little or nothing is to be procured from it. I do not remember that I ever saw any other vegetable than potatoes at a real Highland table; and my visits have been paid at seasons when such things would have been in their prime. It is not to be a great Gourmet to wish for turnips with your boiled mutton, or cabbage with your bacon, or vegetables of some kind in your barley water or in your Spartan decoction of sheep's heads, or celery with your cheese; or to think that if there were an onion in the country, your cold mutton might advantageously be hashed for variety's sake. For aught I have ever seen, there might, generally, as well have been no garden. Where no affection for the subject is shewn by the rich, it is in vain to expect it among the poor; so that little is likely to be here accomplished by example. The price of a gardener's labour is as little an excuse as the climate; for that is low enough: we might even have expected that those who know not what to do with their time, might have found some delight, or at least occupation, in such a pursuit; but this is foolishly to forget that those who have little to do always do less, and that those who have still less business, do nothing.

Johnson, in his grand language, says that "few vows are paid to Flora in the Hebrides." That is no great matter for surprise, when the Goddess of leeks and onions is neglected. Yet we might expect that he who sees nothing without doors but bare brown moors, black bogs, a rocky coast, or a boisterous sea, would try to establish something within his own walls that might smile on him through some part of this never-ending winter. What Coll or Rasay have done so well, every one might do; and there is an unspeakable charm in such a retreat, unknown to him who lives in a land of gardens and summer. Where such things are, nothing can exceed the contrast of the waste wintery heath and rugged rocks without, to the pride of the parterre, the fragrance of summer, and the shade and shelter of green leaves within. To enter thus from the chilly, windy, wet, brown, pathless moor, into green alleys, gravelled walks, and flowery plots, amid blooming roses and all the other sweets of the year, is like a sudden jump from Greenland to Italy. Yet such pleasures are neglected; or enough merely is done to make us wish for more. Here also there is as little excuse as in the case of vegetables. All the flowers of the garden thrive even better than in the Lowlands; for everywhere in the islands and along the west coast, the climate is mild. I have little doubt that the myrtle would bloom out of doors, even in Sky; and a great number of plants that require the greenhouse in winter in the interior, might, in the western Highlands and Islands, remain out, with very little protection from occasional fits of severe weather. I have seen the apple-tree in blossom at Armadale, in September; when the early snow was on the mountains. It is the same with respect to fruit; to the ordinary kinds at least which thrive and ripen in Scotland at large. All these,

wherever they have been tried, succeed perfectly well in the western Highlands, yet are nearly neglected. A gooseberry, a currant, or a strawberry, is almost a phenomenon; and an apple is, I believe, nearly unknown. How well, these and other little expected fruits might succeed, is proved by one experiment on a great scale; the success of which will surprise even gardeners. This is at Keppoch, situated under Ben Nevis; one of the coldest situations of Scotland in winter, and, at all times, the most rainy, certainly, in all Great Britain, as well as the most cloudy. Yet here, not only have I seen the trees bent to the earth with the weight of apples and pears, but standard green gages of a perfect flavour, and with the branches so loaded as to be trailing on the ground. After this, it is in vain to say that the Highlands are unfavourable to fruit, any more than to flowers. Nature would do a great deal for them if they would take the trouble to speak her fair; but she is tenacious of her rights, as her sex well knows how to be; and expects at least to be asked, if not earnestly solicited. It is well when she does not coquet with us in these matters, like the rest of the capricious sisterhood.

I wish that my worthy friends, now that they have learnt Ossian by heart, would take to Cowper, or Milton, or Chaucer, or even to their quasi countryman Dunbar, or to Douglas. Is it possible to read such reading as this, and not die of longing for all which "grove and garden, hill and field, and all that flowery valleys yield." Cannot their own Royal Stewart, of whose race they boast, their Knightly, Gentleman, Prince, James, (not the worthy man who wrote on tobacco,) tempt them to plant even a hawthorn hedge or an eglantine bower. If they will not read in his own works, cannot they do this in Ellis, or, at third hand, in Mr. Washington Irving. Would

they but peruse those little pithy horticultural sentences in Ryder or Moore, which accompany the injunctions that relate to cutting corns and killing pigs, it would be something. Could we but succeed in a radish or a turnip, this would be commencing at the root of a change, and might lead to a radical reformation: and who knows but, in time, that radish might grow to a palm, or that the Macraws and Macrobbs who are now sitting under a fauld dyke or a stone, might not hereafter be found dozing, each man under his vine and his fig-tree; rivalling Mrs. Primrose in gooseberry wine, and Mr. Andrew Knight in the promiscuous cacogamy of strawberries. If Fingal did not know the difference between a Cos lettuce and a pine apple, let them recollect that they have a higher authority, in his and their ultra grandfather Adam, to whom, I doubt not, they can all trace their pedigrees as perfectly as Sir Watkin; and as Scottish gardeners have so long dictated to the world, let us hope that Donald will at length uprouse himself from his potatoe bed, and, shaking the rain drops from his lank and greasy mane, contend for the prize with the "pase Sassanach peasts," "amid freshe flowris all, blew, white, and rede:" aye, and amid solider matters than these. "There is no herte, I deme, in such dispair, Ne yet with thoughtis froward and contraire, So overlaid, but it should soon have bote," if it would but once betake itself to that occupation which, above all other human occupations, is a source of delight, of enjoyment which neither remonstrates nor repents; which, had it even no profit, it would be the wisest man's wisdom to pursue, for which great kings have left their thrones, and which "raised a mortal" higher than Dryden and Timotheus ever raised his patron and their own.

Seriously, I hope that my kind friends with whom

I have so often dined on mutton and potatoes and on mutton and oatcake, will lay these things to heart. I should be most happy to eat hodge podge with them, made of something more than mutton bones and barley; or to have a lettuce to my roast lamb, or a turnip to my boiled mutton. Neither would I object to an apple pie, or to a few strawberries after dinner; nor scorn to stick a rose or a pink in my button hole while I am "wearying" for this very meal. But, alas, I can never expect to be invited to dinner again, after such atrocious ingratitude. It is no matter; if they themselves profit, I shall be satisfied; and shall be well content to go without apple pie all my life, if I can only see a kale yard at every cottage corner, and a string of onions dangling from every smoky roof tree, in place of a collection of dirty dubs and rubbish without, and rotten straw within.

But I must not forget Loch Maree, in the ardour of my patriotism for the improvement of Highland broth. This noble lake lies so completely out of the road, and so far beyond the courage of ordinary travellers, that, except by Pennant, I believe it has never been visited. The length is about fourteen miles, and the greatest breadth three, though in most parts it scarcely exceeds one; while, being bounded by high mountains, and having a very varied and irregular outline, its shores present a good deal of interesting scenery: the entire lake itself being displayed from many different points, and under a great variety of aspects, so as to produce some of the finest specimens of this class of landscape in the Highlands. In point of style, it ranks rather more nearly with Loch Lomond than with any other of the southern lakes; though still very far inferior.

The most accessible and the finest general views, may

be obtained from the rocky hills that bound the exit of the river. The mountain outline, which is grand and various, presents a greater diversity of form and character than any of the Scottish lakes; but Ben Lair is always the principal feature; graceful, solid, and broad. The middle ground is a great source of variety: splendid and wild, an intermixture of rock and wood, more easily compared with some parts of Loch Cateran than with any other well-known scenery, yet still different. The winding and wooded course of the Ewe, adds much to its liveliness; the bright reaches glittering as they emerge from among the trees and rocks through which the river forces its way. Though there is a road on each side of the lake, the circuit is both laborious and tedious. Fortunately, our gig was not very heavy; and by means of a cart and twelve men, we contrived to transport it from the vessel; to the great wonder of the natives, and doubtless of the lake also, which had never, since its birth, borne so gay a barge.

The first day of creation was not more beautiful. July, the June of this country, was in its full glory. A few thin silvery clouds rested on the clear blue sky, and the sun shed a flood of light over the bright surface of the lake, which reflected every rock and every tree that hung over the glassy surface. Even the line of the shore was undistinguishable; except when the casual passage of a gentle air, descending from the hills, ruffled for a moment the bright expanse; when the gay vision vanished, till again, as the breeze passed off across the water, it collected its scattered fragments; reappearing in all its former brilliancy, and rivalling its original. Even the dark firs assumed a look of spring: and the barren and cold grey cliffs of Ben Lair seemed to rejoice in the bright sunshine. While the warm brown and

glowing purple of the heath, now in full blossom, tinged the faces of the nearer hills with that richness of colour known only to these mountainous regions, every summit, as it retired, assumed a purpler and a bluer tone, till the last peaks emulated the misty azure of the sky into which they melted, as if they had belonged rather to the fields of air than to the earth below.

It was a scene, as the Emperor Charles said of Florence, too beautiful to be looked at except on holidays. But such days are indeed the holidays of the Highlands; rare, alike, and precious, and able to compensate for many previous ones of mist and rain, of weariness and disappointment. It is not only that nature gives us a keener enjoyment of those gleams of happiness which occasionally break through the dreary atmosphere of life, but that, as if in compensation of the melancholy and savage aspect which a mountainous country derives from bad weather, its hours of sunshine are hours which can be found no where else. No one can know the full value of summer who has not known it in a land of mountains; no one can feel, who has not felt it among the hills, the joy with which the sun can fill the mind, as it fills the atmosphere; the sense of beauty, of bounding, exuberant happiness in which it wraps our very existence as it does the landscape; giving to every feature, to the wildest mountain summit and the gloomiest valley, to the barest rock and the lowliest flower, charms to which all the glories of the richest cultivated country are insipid and tame.

The northern margin of Loch Maree presents a great variety of close shore scenery, consisting of rocky and wooded bays and creeks rising into noble overhanging cliffs and mountains; and it displays also the finest general views of the lake. The effect of Sleugach, seen at

once from its base to its summit, is perhaps more striking than that of any mountain in Scotland. Where the skirts of Ben Lair descend steep into the water, the scenes are often peculiarly original as well as grand. In one place in particular, the remains of a fir forest, in a situation almost incredible, produce a style of landscape that might be expected in the Alps, but not among the more confined scope and tamer arrangements of Scottish mountains. Immediately from the water's edge, a lofty range of grey cliffs rises to a great height; so steep as almost to seem perpendicular, but varied by fissures and by projections covered with grass and wild plants. Wherever it is possible for a tree to take root, there firs of ancient and noble growth, and of the most wild and beautiful forms, are seen rising above each other so that the top of the one often covers the root of the succeeding, or else thrown out horizontally in various fantastic and picturesque modes. Now and then, some one more wild and strange than the others, or some shivered trunk or fallen tree, serves to vary the aspect of this strange forest, marking also the lapse of ages and the force of the winter storms which they so long have braved.

The eastern extremity of the lake becomes insipid; terminating in a range of meadows, through which the stream winds its sluggish way. But beyond, all is rude and savage; displaying a chaos of wild mountains and a succession of white precipices and spiry snow-white crags; bright, cold, and dreary, and giving a character of polar sterility to the landscape, as if no living being, not even vegetable life, could here find home or refuge. Evening arrived as we reached this end of the lake; for not a breeze had blown to aid us. The long shadows of the mountains were now stretching across the water, and a vast and broad body of shade on the western hills, gave

a repose to the scene, so deep and so solemn, that even the liquid sound which followed the dip of the oars, seemed an intrusion on the universal hush of nature. No living object was seen or heard, and even the occasional passage of the bee that winged its evening way home to its mountain abode in the heath, disturbed a silence that appeared never before to have been interrupted. The last crimson at length vanished from the sharp rocky summits of the eastern hills, and all became alike wrapped in one gentle hue of tranquil grey. But it was the summer twilight of a northern July, and night was now but one long and lovely evening.

It was with some difficulty that we explored our nocturnal way through the labyrinth of islands in the centre of this lake; as they are little raised above the water, and covered with scattered firs and with thickets of birch, alder, and holly, while they are separated by narrow and tortuous channels. The features of the whole are so exactly alike, that no part can be distinguished from another. Inch Maree has been dedicated to a saint of that name; and it still contains a burial place, chosen, it is said, like all those which are found in islands, to prevent depredations from the wolves of ancient days. This theory, however, seems disputable; because the extirpation of this animal is an event of considerable antiquity, and many of these burial grounds seem of comparatively modern times. Here also there was a sacred well, in which, as in St. Fillan's, lunatics were dipped, with the usual offerings of money: but the well remains, and the practice has passed away. Although now midnight, the heat was so great as to be almost oppressive, exceeding seventy degrees; an occurrence not very uncommon in these Highland valleys in summer. But the hot breeze served to fill our sails,

and, by midnight, had brought us back to the river: nor were we sorry to find, some time after, on board of our vessel, the dinner which we had not calculated on deferring to the morning of a following day.

Ben Lair will well repay the toil of the expedition to its summit. The height of this mountain exceeds three thousand feet, and though it produces few alpine plants to regale a botanist, a mineralogist will find enough employment in collecting the greatest variety of quartz that is perhaps to be found in any one place in the world; ranging from jet black, through every possible gradation, to snow white, and equally differing in texture and appearance. But its great attractions are the views from the summit, and chiefly to the northward. The eye wanders far over the wildest mountains of Rossshire, and through a country as apparently uninhabitable as it is uninhabited. It is usual, in describing mountain scenery, to speak of rocks and precipices, whether present or not; but here they exist without any need of exaggeration. There is the reality in this district, not merely the name; mountains whose faces show the very skeleton of the earth, in all the details of its stratification, for miles together; with deep and wide valleys of enormous dimensions, bounded by vertical acclivities, just as the little ravines of torrents are in other places. Every thing is gigantic and terrible; wild and strange and new. From the very summit of this mountain, the eye sees at once down into a valley, as if perpendicularly beneath, and at a depth of at least three thousand feet; while the various precipices that rise all around, no less than those which start immediately from beneath the feet, tending downwards into the abyss, aid the deception which makes us imagine that even ourselves are suspended above it. Numerous lakes, among which Loch Fuir is

conspicuous, add to the beauty of this wild and wonderful scenery; increasing also the picturesque effect produced by the infinite variety and intricacy of the mountain forms, by the deep shadows of the valleys, the reflected tints on the mountains, and the innumerable atmospheric effects in which scenery of this class always abounds.

It is time, however, to dismiss Loch Ewe and all its concerns. But I ought not to forget, before quitting Loch Maree, what is interesting as a point of natural history, namely, the existence of the grey eagle in this place; because it is not known any where else in Scotland. There was a pair in Pennant's time, and there is a pair still; one of which I had the good fortune to see. It is a long-lived bird; and it is not unlikely that these are the same individuals. Why they are found no where else, or why they are found at all, are questions which Mr. Pennant seems to have been as unable to answer as John Gilpin was to satisfy his friend the Calender in the matter of his progression to Ware. Being very curious myself, in this affair, as uniting constancy and fidelity, "health and longevity," "adhesiveness," and many other noted qualities, with one still more admirable than all in the eyes of the geometrical-ratio-men, that of not multiplying, I applied to the Herald's office, being the only body of philosophers in this country by whom zoology and ornithology are cultivated; as we have been lately assured on high authority that this kind of "blazon" is neglected at the rival establishment in Great Russel Street. But Richmond and Clarenceux pleaded, "not found;" and the only suggestion which Rouge Dragon had to offer, was that it was the same pair which was dismissed from the ark at the deluge. By this I knew that Rouge Dragon was a geologist also.

LOCH GREINORD, LITTLE LOCH BROOM, KEA CLOCH, LOCH BROOM, ULLAPOOL.

It was on the lovely morning of a bright Sunday that we left our vessel to row on shore into Loch Greinord. Whatever be the week, this day should always be a fine one, at least in Roman Catholic countries. The sun should shine upon it even in the English church. There is an association in the very name, which makes us expect a day of sunshine and beauty; which gives it a claim, at least, on serenity and brightness, on blue skies and smiling landscapes. Even to the Protestant, who does not dance, it ought to be a day of happiness, as it is the day of religion and the day of rest from labour and from care. If indeed but the Sunday be fine, even though we should not imitate the populace in employing it out of doors in active or idle pleasures, the storm and the rain of the week are forgotten. But a Sunday of gloom casts its gloom over all the days that are gone, though these should have been a week of sunshine. It is not unimportant that this day should, in every sense, be a day of enjoyment and happiness; of that pleasure which has neither regret nor repentance. Such is the enjoyment which the fair face of nature surely gives. There is much power in this association; in all the associations that belong to this day; and it is to the recollection of this periodical holiday of our early youth, of our earliest childhood, that we may trace, through life, the pleasure which thus comes round on every seventh day, and much

also of that sense of delight which gilds, even the exercise of what we know to be a duty. Whose heart does not beat at the thoughts of Sunday; and with whose feelings are there not entwined a thousand associations to make it a day of joy, of expected happiness, which even the experience of years, and the certainty of disappointment cannot quench. It is not immaterial, in a deeper view, that it should be such; that happiness should attend it, even in the thoughts and in the performance of those exercises and duties where our highest interests are concerned: and injudicious as dark was the spirit which made it a day of mortification and gloom. If even the complexion of the elements, the miseries of a Sunday of obscurity and tempest, of rain and dreariness, can thus affect us, chilling our minds and hearts, far worse is that dreariness of the countenance and that gloom of the soul, which, even under the smiles of a bright sun and an azure sky, render this day of rejoicing, a day of penance and sadness, of darkness and fear. This is not the character of our religion, nor should it be the character of our Sunday. But in this Presbyterian country, the fog and the mist, the rain and the storm, suit but too well the feelings and the character of the mental day. Yet, fortunately, this too is wearing out. In the Highlands, in particular, it is seldom seen; and it is delightful to contemplate the cheerful faces, cheerful though sedate, and the bright dresses which, once in the week of labour and dulness, meet on the brown moor or the bleak sea shore: renewing the friendships and discussions of the week, then joining with gravity, but not with gloom, in the performance of their duties, and again, without levity, meeting to terminate their little politics and affairs, before they disperse to the toils of the ensuing period. If, in the

Highlands, there is not the joy of an English Sunday, neither is there the mortified and affected precision and solemnity of the Lowland one: nor do I know where the recurrence of this day produces effects which we contemplate with more of heartfelt pleasure, and with less of desire to censure.

As we landed, the distant tinkle of a small bell announced a church at hand; and on surmounting an eminence, the people appeared, flocking towards it from all the surrounding country. A few groups which had already arrived, were collected in knots, splendent in all the variety of Sunday tartans, on the open brown heath where stood the simple church. At a distance, single figures or small parties were seen descending the hills; appearing and disappearing alternately, as the inequalities of the ground occasionally concealed them from our view, and conspicuous, from the lively colour of their dresses and the snow-white caps of the women. A few older people, tired with their walks, sat in conversation on the banks around: the broad blue bonnet of the men pulled over the grey locks that hung down their temples, and the plaids of the old women thrown over the head so as to serve the purpose of cap and cloak both. Nothing beyond a smile was to be seen; nor was there a voice to be distinguished above the general low murmur of the whole: every thing being composed to a gravity which bespoke the business of the day and the appropriate feelings of the people. A road, leading along the shore, presented a long irregular perspective of figures flocking in from the little villages and houses that were scattered about the coast; the occasional landing of a boat full of men and women serving to vary and enliven the scene, while others were seen rowing in from different parts of the Bay, intermixed with white sails

which indicated the arrival of parties from places more remote.

The distance from which the Highlanders come to the church, is often very great, owing to the extent of many of the parishes. It is not very unusual to find that they have walked ten, or even twenty miles for this purpose. It requires much time therefore to collect them; and the service, consequently, is generally very late. But, to a southern traveller, every thing else is wanting, of that which he has been accustomed, from his infancy, to associate with the acts and feelings of devotion. Here, there is no ancient church of remote and venerable architecture, with its massy porch and ornamented windows, with its Gothic tower and spiry pinnacles embosomed in trees, bespeaking at once the antiquity of our worship and the reverence in which it has been held from remote periods. Instead of these objects, exciting recollections that carry the mind back to the earliest ages of religion, and to the history of its purity, its corruptions, and its reform, he sees a mean building, often little better than an English barn, pitched on some waste ground or bare heath, as if it were the work of yesterday, the church of a new people, of a savage nation but recently converted, without an enclosure, and without even those solemn and appropriate accompaniments, the tombstones and the memorials of those who, in their death, seem to have sought that vicinity which, in life, was at once the source and the promise of all their future hopes. Within, no coloured light streams through the tracery of windows rich in "storied glass," no memorials of warlike knights in monumental brass or marble meet the eye, not even the plainer tombstones of those whose progeny now kneel in devotion where their ancestors, for successive generations, knelt before. The discordant tinkling of the

presbyterian kettle grates on his ear, when he calls to mind the solemn and grave tones of his own steeple, rolling along the valley, and re-echoed from the woods and hills as they swelled on the breeze. Here, all is mean and bare; and, too often, even this poverty is further debased by ruin and neglect. The very sight of the congregation, bonnetted as if in the open air, interferes, in the mind of an English spectator, with that feeling of devotion which would otherwise be excited by the profound attention which reigns around and sits on every countenance.

There is nothing at Loch Greinord, nor in the surrounding country, which can induce an ordinary traveller to bestow his time on it. But at a short distance from the coast, the mountains of the interior, which now again begin, after a considerable interval, to approach the sea, form a magnificent screen; Kea Cloch, which separates Loch Greinord from little Loch Broom, presenting an object not less conspicuous for its height than for the elegance of its form.

In the Colombiere, as must be well known to the gentlemen of your cloth, among other laws, there was one by which, as you know, the Knights were obliged, on their return from an expedition, to give a faithful account of all their adventures, whether honourable or degrading, unfortunate or successful. If I do not wear my spurs, it is because your ship, like "your dull ass," does not choose to mend its pace by spurring; not because I have not earned them; and if not a knight errant, I hope that by this time I may pass for a knight natant, which is as good. Hence it is that I have considered myself bound by the laws of the Colombiere; trusting that you, my dear Scott, who are my confessor, will not "write me down an ass" because of my confessions,

past, present, or to come, nor pick a hole in my surcoat where it may appear tempting; but, like a true knight yourself, hold the balance of even-handed justice. If that adventurous Hidalgo, Don Quixote, was not degraded by the alarm of the fulling mills, neither, I trust, shall my courage be suspected because of my surprise in Loch Broom.

We had anchored in this inlet; and, in the night, I was roused by a great weight, tumbling, with vast commotion and outrage, into my birth. Concluding, very logically, that the ship had gone to pieces, I put out my hand in some alarm, and laid hold of a pair of horns. Half asleep, I thought I was already in the hands of Davy Jones; and both Davy and I were soon upon the cabin floor. It proved to be a goat, which the men had brought on board that we might be sure of milk for our breakfasts. Unluckily, when it came to be milked, it was discovered to be a he goat; such was the pastoral knowledge of our boatswain. The animal had found the deck cold, and had scrambled down the companion ladder, whence he thus proposed himself for my bedfellow. A bedfellow in a birth, ought however to be somewhat more choice; as there are no means of lying "extrema sponda," if you chance to disagree. Milk, of course, we obtained none from our horned friend; but he paid his passage, and his diet too, by his harlequin tricks. His diet, it is true, was rather heterodox; as it consisted, except on holidays, of kippered salmon, brown paper, old hoops, carpenter's chips, and pigtail tobacco. The paper was plundered from my specimens; but the depredations on the fish became so serious, that we were obliged to hoist them into the shrouds out of his reach. His system of diet was somewhat extraordinary, it must be owned; but as the universal scavenger, at least of the

vegetable creation, the goat seems to outdo even the hog. Indeed I never could discover any thing which our bearded companion would not eat, except oakum, which always puzzled him. Nature has been very ingenious in inventing some animal or other to devour every thing; as if eating was the sole purpose of creation; to eat and to be eaten, all the business of the universe: and if, as Mr. Humboldt says, (credat,) the Gourmets of the Oroonoko live on clay, as we of the Thames and the Tweed do on beef steaks and "singit sheep heads," I do not despair of yet hearing of some creature who may feed, like the ostrich, on a compote of horse shoes and tenpenny nails, or perhaps on purees of graywacké and granite. This most amusing and docile and intelligent of all the four-legged tribes, has now, however, become rare in the Highlands; being rather suffered than encouraged. The Caprine population, here, as in Wales, has undergone the same revolution which it experienced in former days at Capri. The gentlemen of Leeds have been the Tiberiuses of the bearded race; finding that it was all cry and little wool. In those happy days when the beaux and the dandies emulated lions in the length of their manes, when the gallant Lovelace could pathetically complain to his mistress that he had been obliged to wring the dews of the night from his wig, the goat received that respect which the persistence of his buckle merited, and bounded from rock to rock, nourishing his length of hair and careless of future shaving. But now, alas! their friends are all concentrated behind the bar and on the episcopal bench; and the wisdom of a few hundred Welsh beards is sufficient to clothe with sapience all the sculls which flourish in the several departments of Westminster. Such are the catenations of political economy. Often, in contemplating my friend

Pogonatus, did I figure to myself the quirks and crotchets, the doubtings, the decisions, the special pleadings and replies and rejoinders and rebutters, that lay perdue under his shaggy coat, while he was unconsciously chewing his quid; only waiting for the fingers of the barber and a few yards of silk, to blaze forth in forensic fire or suffocate us in the murky obscurities of causidical smoke; to empty our purses without filling our heads, to get possession of our lands, and to bind us within the magic circle of that court which was unquestionably projected by Methuselah, when men "were secure that their lives would endure for a thousand long years."

Little Loch Broom is utterly without interest; except perhaps at Dundonald, which forms its further extremity, and at the ascent of Kea Cloch. This expedition promised to be long and laborious. The Captain vowed it was useless, and wanted to weigh his anchor. "Non est tanti," said the Captain. Duncan, the greasy cook, thought otherwise, and Duncan was a philosopher: a "stickit" philosopher, he was admitted to be by the whole crew. No good deed was ever performed by a "tanti" man, said Duncan. True, Duncan, thou wert a worthy cook; it is a base, mercantile, pence-table, notion. —"Permitte divis cætera," said Duncan; for greasy as he was, he had surmounted the profundities of Ruddiman's grammar; which was one reason, doubtless, why his dinners were detestable. Who can foresee the end. Right, Duncan. Did not the stupidity of an apothecary produce Paraguay, and Ravaillac, and gunpowder plot, and Pascal, and much more. When such things hang on a sore leg, who knows but we may find a diamond mine on Kea Cloch, when we are looking for granite. True, Duncan; had Michael Angelo stuck to his colours

and his brushes, thou mightest now have been studying in the Golden Legend instead of Boston's Fourfold State, and thou wouldest not have been roasting legs of mutton on a Friday. Thus the day was won.

From this mountain there descends a torrent of great size, with a length of almost continuous cascades which I am afraid to name, lest you should think that I am saying the thing which is not. I will only call it two miles; for fear that if I said it was more, you would not believe me. This stream may indeed be considered an epitome of cascade landscape: if I were to call it a dictionary, it would be a more apt term. If it does not contain every species of waterfall, it at least possesses a type of every genus; to use the language of naturalists: and to describe it all, would be to write a general history of cascades. The forms of the rocks which accompany its course, are bold, broad, and various; while the wild trees, the fantastical fir, with the aspen, alder, birch, oak, and ash, add variety to ornament; sometimes closing over to conceal it, at others springing solitary from the crevices of the rocks, or, hanging over the deep ravine, or else, broken by the winter storms, extending their aged trunks to form fearful bridges across the fathomless abyss.

So deep is its course in some places, in the ravine which it has cut for itself, that the water is invisible; and it is only by a distant and sullen roaring that we can conjecture its presence. Pursuing the channel, a glimpse of light is sometimes seen amid the blackness of the abyss, where some unusual obstruction impedes its career; till, struggling at length towards the light, it is seen foaming and boiling among the huge fragments below, whence once more emerging into day, it resumes the more common characters of a cascade or a broken torrent.

It is even more striking where it falls suddenly into the invisible depths of its extraordinary bed. At one point, in particular, the river, thundering down from aloft over shelves and fragments, in a thousand falls, becomes a gentle stream, murmuring among pebbles and beneath a wild bower of mountain wood, till, at length, forming a miniature lake, its waters subside to repose. Hence flowing through a deep fissure, silent, smooth, and dark, scarcely betraying its motion by a murmur, on a sudden, it breaks into open day on the brink of a fathomless depth, and is, in an instant, precipitated, in one white torrent of foam, into utter darkness; its light gradually diminishing till it disappears, as if it had sunk to the centre of the earth.

Of the heights of many of these falls, it is not very easy to form an estimate; but of two or three which I could more particularly examine, the altitude cannot be less than an hundred and fifty, and two hundred feet. These are single falls; but if a succession of foaming cascades, producing all the effect of one, may be admitted as such, some of them amount to many hundred feet; leaving at an incalculable distance all the cascades which I have seen in Scotland. One series, forming a continuous fall to the eye, could not have been short of eight hundred.

To pass over the endless scenes of this world of waterfalls, I shall notice but one more, where the river, having acquired its full dimensions, and descending in foam high above our heads, in a continued series of broken and intricate cascades, falls in one wide sheet into a pool just at our feet; there whirling about among the ledges of rock, and spreading widely into waves, till, again collecting, it is precipitated beneath in one thundering torrent, lost amid the darkness below, and among

the vapour which, like a cloud, rises from the abyss. Soon reappearing, it is seen again in foam, roaring along its rocky and various channel, till it disappears, from the mere diminution produced by distance; its cascade-like course beneath, being probably not less than a mile; and, as thus seen, emulating one continued fall.

In ascending, we were at length caught in a trap, where there was no resource but to return, or to cross the torrent. The latter seemed impossible; and no man who has laboured hard for a long contemplated object, at length nearly within his grasp, ever willingly did the former. This is a case in which hazard is despised; where, even life seems nothing in the balance: though we must not forget, at the same time, that, in the moment of ardour, as in the heat of action, we do not calculate. If we did, there would be few hazards encountered by flood or field; and I should have returned to my vessel, congratulating myself on my prudence, and, as is not very common with travellers, boasting of cowardice instead of courage. But we searched far and wide, and at length I saw my friend, honest John Macdonald, perched, very much like the he-goat which he had proposed to milk, on the point of a projecting shelf, looking as cool as if he had been on the jib-boom end. We could only converse by signs; for, above and around, the cataract was thundering with a noise that would have swallowed up, even the sound of the ear-piercing whistle that hung at his button. With that, and with the smoke and fury and spray of the fall, my nerves became somewhat discomposed: but water and foam and spray were his elements, and he only turned the quid round in his mouth. Upwards, I could look with some confidence, for there was something to look at; matter, solidity, substance to hold by, or, at least, something to imagine of a

tangible nature. But below—as Saussure advises in his Alpine wanderings, I thought to look till I was satiated with the view, and thus, as he recommends, to steady my nerves by a full dose: "drinking largely sobers us again." I did look; but there was nothing to see. The shelf was suspended on vacancy. There was neither water nor sound nor sight: the cascade was gone; sunk into the abyss.

John talked of leaping the fall. I thought of the fall of Bajazet at Southwark Fair, and of leaping into eternity; for the chasm beneath looked as like the descent into Hades as if it had been the direct road. It was very well for him; but what chance had I against a Highlander, with legs like a deer and muscles like fiddle strings, and who had, moreover, been scrambling about the cross trees and the gaff end, riding on the bobstay and taking in the studding sail yards since he was ten years old. But example is something, and shame is more. In the turning of a handspike, he was on the other side. Like Alexander, I sighed and looked and looked again; but honour won the day, and I never struck the ground with half so much satisfaction. It would have been a good leap, even across three straws; but above the bottomless pit—I suppose this is the very leap which your friend Morton made.

In continuing the ascent, the river was soon found running along its channel, shaded with birch and alder, the sweetest of pastoral streams; and I almost forgot that I was three thousand feet above the sea, so tranquil and rural did every thing appear. But the change of scene was sudden indeed, when, taking a new course through a lateral valley, we found ourselves in the region of snow, on a brilliant frozen plain. As this snow could not have dissolved before the winter, it is probably here

permanent from year to year. The summit of the mountain, extending to five or six hundred perpendicular feet above this point, is a rocky and narrow ridge, serrated into peaks, and of a very marked and picturesque character. Though formed of sandstone, as is the whole mountain from the very base, it has the general aspect of granite; resembling the summits of the Arran hills. Overtopping all the neighbouring land, it commands a wide extent of the interior country, displaying all the details of Loch Broom and Loch Greinord, and losing itself eastward, in a series of deep valleys, ridges, and ravines, of bare white rock, characterized by an aspect of desolation not easily exceeded. The great, but desert lake, Loch Fannich, was also hence visible; bright glittering among the rocky mountains and moors of this terrible country. Seaward, it commands the extensive group of the Summer Islands; but all beyond is the boundless ocean.

The effect of the valley on the west side, which separates it from Loch Greinord, is more striking from its vacuity than if it had displayed the utmost intricacy of form. On each side it rises in one dead and flat surface; its bottom invisible from above, and prolonged without apparent beginning or termination. The sense of emptiness which was produced on looking down into it, was absolutely painful: it seemed like standing on the brink of eternity. I proceeded for some distance along the giddy ridge, in hopes of seeing its termination; but all continued vacant, desolate, silent, dazzling, and boundless. Of the height of Kea Cloch I cannot speak with precision, having forgotten to bring up the barometer. But though it seems to have been completely overlooked by mapmakers and travellers, it must be among the highest mountains of the west coast, if not of Scotland;

while, as it rises immediately from the sea by as steep an acclivity as is well possible, and without competitors, its apparent altitude is greater than that of any single mountain in Scotland, excepting perhaps Ben Nevis.

Little Loch Broom is separated from its neighbour, Loch Broom, by so narrow a ridge, that, from the summit, we can command a view of both. This latter presents a totally new scene at its entrance, in the wide-spread archipelago of the Summer Isles, which cover the sea. Here it is a wide and spacious bay; but after passing St. Martin's Island, the seat of one of the great and useless fishing establishments, it begins to contract; and, assuming a moderate breadth near Ullapool, is continued, with a flexuous course, for a considerable depth inland; terminating, at length, in a deep valley which conducts the road to Dingwall. Ben More, forming a prolonged, square, and conspicuous ridge, like an enormous wall, gives a peculiar character to Ullapool, and to that part of the inlet; but elsewhere, though the mountain boundary is lofty, and not without variety, it presents no peculiar interest nor any picturesque beauty. But the navigation is pleasing; being sufficiently varied in character, and the margins far from deficient in wood. I know not how far it will interest a botanist to be told that the great Epilobium, the French willow of our gardens, grows here out of the sea cliffs and on the very margin of the ocean. It is a rare plant any where; but was never, I believe, suspected of maritime attachments.

Ullapool is a considerable village, pleasingly situated on the margin of the water, with an excellent and spacious harbour. Though it has neither the fishery nor the trade that was once hoped, it is not dormant; and were the herrings again to return to this coast, or the Scottish cod fishery to be more actively pursued than it has yet been,

it might become a place of some importance. The total neglect of the lobster fishery, not only here, but every where on the west coast of Scotland, causes the surrender of one advantage from which Ullapool might materially benefit; as it is a very convenient place of resort for the London fish traders, and more particularly for those who supply the various western towns of England. Thus also the trade from the coast in living cod, is far less than it might be if inhabited by any other population. But it is in vain to attempt to conceal or qualify the indolence of the Highlanders in this respect; which is rendered the more striking, when compared with the activity of the Orkney and Caithness men. It is not uncommon to find the smacks fishing for themselves, hence to the Stack and Skerries; at great demurrage, and with the risk, as well, of losing their fish from the unavoidable delay, as of missing the market; when it would be no less for the interest of the natives than of themselves, to make up their cargoes in a day or two; as might easily be done, and at a price which they would prefer paying, to catching them by their own labour. That price, which is twopence for each fish, great and small, leaves a very sufficient profit to the takers; and one indeed, by which they might even enrich themselves.

The interior country, from Loch Broom northwards, is not deficient, at least in the fundamental principles of alpine beauty; as the hills have a great deal of character, and are interspersed with small lakes that would often be very beautiful had they any wood. But scarcely a shrub or tree is to be seen for miles; and the eye, wearied with the wide extended waste of barren moor and naked rock, soon ceases to take an interest in that which, itself, ceases, after the first impression, to offer any variety, and which seems condemned to eternal and hopeless sterility.



TANERA. HERRINGS.

WHATEVER may be the advantages of travelling in a ship, as I formerly discussed them, I suspect there is one essential point, in which equitation is to be preferred. I perceive that I have almost forgotten every thing about the Summer Islands; whether, indeed, there was aught worth remembering, I doubt. This it is to observe from a boat, which keeps the ideas in a perpetual state of fluctuation, and does not allow the objects to concentrate themselves and adhere. Now the very act of riding, serves, by its fundamental succussions, to nail and fix the observations in the sensorium, just as stones are rammed down into the street by a pavior's beetle. And this is the reason why the equestrian traveller is enabled to give so much better an account of the countries he passes through, than he who lounges in a well-hung carriage. Hence, doubtless, the accuracy of Arthur Young, and of the gentlemen who equitate, like the Parthians and Scythians of old, through Persia and Tartary. Who indeed ever wrote a tour that was worth reading, out of a post chaise. I do not exactly suppose that the sensorium lies in that part which receives these impulses through the intervention of the saddle. Yet even that may be doubted; since this method is also approved by schoolmasters, and since it is unquestionable, that it is by the method of fundamental impulses, by a practical knowledge of the verb τύπτω, that are erected those stupendous structures of classical acquirement, those towering edi-

fices of hic hæc hoc, which we witness every day in grown gentlemen. If it requires seven or eight long years, even by these aids and appliances, to learn to construe Phædrus without a dictionary, if in seven or seventeen more, an aspirant in the House, or a judge on the bench, is enabled to quote some pithy saw from the Syntax, an apothecary to read and a physician to write, by halves, what they would be puzzled to complete in case, mood, and gender, an attorney to eke out the deficient syllables of Ca. sa., Re. fa. lo., or Sus. per. col, or a learned serjeant to translate the Ciceronian language of Domesday book, or Fleta, cum seisinis socagiis et feoffamentis his pertinentibus, heaven only knows to what number of centuries our education might extend without them. It is plain that the lustral flogging of boys at parish boundaries, proceeds on the same principle. Unluckily, I could not ride to the Summer Isles, nor on them either; so that you must be content with something that is akin to no account at all.

One misfortune indeed attends the horseman, as Duncan's dingy Horace informed me. What with defects of nails, defects of shoes, defect of hay, defect of corn, to say nothing of defects of horse, he is very apt to carry double; and the black lady who sits behind him is not an amiable companion. But, alas! "Scandit æratas vitiosa naves" also. And hence it was, as Duncan well remarked, that even our copper sheathing would not keep her out. In short, our vessel bore a goodly submarine garden of weeds, and it became expedient to scrub her bottom, as she sailed heavily: an operation confirming also, by its good effects, the theory which I have just laid down. We therefore proceeded to Tanera More. This is the largest of the Summer Islands, being about two miles in length and one in breadth, and it is the only one of the group which is inhabited. It is bare and bleak, and about four or five

hundred feet high; but, like all the others, it is without picturesque beauty, except where, by chance, the rocky cliffs, by which they are all bounded, contain caverns or high projecting points. But of this kind of scenery there is so much everywhere, that it almost ceases to attract notice; unless where it is very new in character, or very striking. Why these should be called the Summer Islands I know not; as they have a most wintery aspect, as much from their bareness and rocky outlines, as from the ugly red colour and the forms of the cliffs.

There is a very advantageous view of the whole from the summit of this island; and the fiery setting of a stormy-looking sun upon a dark breezy sea did not render their appearance more enticing. Such is the effect of casualty, in an atmosphere so variable and so often repulsive as that of the western coast. Yesterday, all was bright and beautiful; and nothing could have appeared more engaging than this far-spread glassy sea, sprinkled all over with soft, misty islands, and bounded on the east by the varied and picturesque mountains of Rossshire. Including the large and the small, there are about thirty of these islands, widely scattered over an extensive tract; but only nine or ten are of sufficient size to be used as pastures. From the name of one, Eilan Clearach, the Isle of the Clergy, it has probably contained some chapel or cell; but I saw no remains in passing by, nor did I hear of any; so that I had no inducement to land on it. They indeed resemble each other so much in their general appearance, as to offer no apparent compensation for the long and laborious navigation it would require to examine them all. Though the traveller's love of islands should equal that of Sancho, it will be very apt to cool after visiting an hundred or two; particularly when, as here, he finds a rude sea breaking against a barrier of

hideous red rocks, and within these a dreary green plain; more particularly still, when he finds no inhabitants but gulls without and sheep within, and that the last is like the first.

Tanera More, besides a farm, contains an extensive establishment, provided with a range of smoking houses, long since rendered useless by the desertion of the herring shoals. The fishery now is very trifling; but its pier is still an occasional rendezvous for the herring vessels which visit this coast. This was one of the establishments, which, like that of Ullapool, Loch Torridon, and others, just noticed, were erected when mines of wealth were to have been fished up from the bottom of the sea: when England and Scotland were herring mad, when there was more avarice than forethought, more enterprise than knowledge, or, as Mr. Nicholson, who has gained an excellent house by it, remarked, more money than wit. Steen and Tobermory also, like the rest, have long continued as memorials of the same thoughtless anticipations; but time will probably render useful, in a different way, establishments that will never produce what was expected from them; unless this most capricious fish should again return to its long-abandoned haunts. You will ask me what business I have to write about herrings, when I am not a Commissioner of Fisheries, nor a Commissioner of Excise, nor a fisherman, nor a Linnæus or a Bloch, nor any thing else. Have I not been at the Promontory of Noses, and why should I not write as well as other people. If that rule held, there would be fewer books than there are. But "bide you a wee;" and if I know not how to be right myself, see if I do not prove that others are wrong. We can only cross the ditch on the bodies of the slain; and as "Serpens nisi serpentem comederit non fit Draco," I shall at least

begin by swallowing up Pennant and Anderson, the great lights of this question; "lights," however, "which do mislead the" fishermen, and, what is worse, have been misleading them for this half century past. I do not propose to arrive at the state of a Dragon myself; but hope, at least, to clear the way for others.

It is extraordinary that a writer so ambitious of correctness as Pennant, a person so habitually careful, and who is generally so judicious on the topics which he has undertaken to treat, should have so far given way to the influence of the imagination in his account of the Migration of the Herring. It is not in the least surprising, however, that this tale has been repeated over and over again; even by those who have had daily evidence of the visionary nature of his hypothesis before their eyes. So much easier is it to follow than to observe. If Pennant's theory had terminated in a mere speculation on a question of natural history, it would have been of no moment; but as the opinion respecting the steady migration of the herring shoals has led to so many expensive establishments, now become, like that of Tanera, useless, it would be desirable that the false theory should be abandoned, even though a better should not be discovered. There are few subjects more worthy the attention of a naturalist; but these gentlemen are, unfortunately, always so busy in making new arrangements, and in contriving new names, and in changing the old ones, that they have never any time to attend to the natural history of the animals which they seem so anxious to impale and pin in their drawers, to name, and arrange, and derange, and transpose, and classify, and specify, and varnish, and bake, and stuff, and skin, and perch, and display. Like logic, this science seems to end where it begins.

I am not, however, so profound a chronologist in

the matter of herrings, as to know whether Pennant has misled Anderson, or Anderson Pennant. But we may, for the present, shift the weight off the shoulders of the Naturalist on those of the Historian of Greenland and Iceland; who deserves the birch at any rate, if he were but the copy: since it was his duty to investigate the truth, when he was directing and disposing of the capital of those who were silly enough to put their trust in his book. It was at least his duty not to tell what was not true. He writes with as much confidence as if he were king of the herrings, or at least quarter-master-general of the army; as if he himself had swum at their head, had threaded all the mazes of Norway, and doubled all the capes of Scotland. That writers should display fertility of imagination when they are writing romances, is highly laudable; and that they should do this with the minuteness of Defoe, is more laudable still. But it is really marvellous how a man, who professes to be collecting and detailing cold truths, matters of journal and ledger, can sit soberly down and narrate what he must know, if he does at least know and consider what he is writing about or for what purpose he is writing, to be a pure fable. Others may profit by the remark as well as Anderson: somewhat better indeed if they choose; since he is dust. I am not very fond of quotations, as you have long known, being sufficiently troubled to find room for my own property; but this is really deserving of something, at least like a quotation, which I shall render as brief as I can, for the same reasons.

He begins by saying that, in Iceland, the herrings are two feet long; which is just as true as that the whale in Lucian's True History had an island covered with woods, of thirty miles in length, in its stomach. The army of herrings which issues from these regions every summer,

is chased by all kinds of sea monsters, southward; by whales, among others, who can scarcely swallow an anchovy, much less a herring. In its progress it divides into two columns; the eastern wing making for the North Cape and descending the coast of Norway. But this eastern wing divides itself again; so that one division enters through the Sound into the Baltic, while the other, splitting a second time on the north point of Jutland, forms two lines. One of these defiles along the eastern shore of Denmark, so as to reunite itself by means of the Belts with the Baltic division; and the other, which coasts Sleswick, Holstein, Bremen, and Friesland, enters by the Texel into the Zuyder Zee, to return again into the North Sea. The second grand division, which takes to the westward, and which, as he says, is the greatest column, goes on straight to Shetland and Orkney, and thence to Scotland; where it divides again into two subsidiary columns, of which, one, descending the eastern coast, makes the round of England, detaching at the same time parties into the harbours of Friesland, Holland, Zealand, Brabant, Flanders, and France. This accuracy is quite delightful; Polybius himself might have learnt how to write, from this most careful narrator of a herring campaign. The western Scottish army, in the mean time, divides itself among the Irish and the Highlanders, knowing that they are starving; while the eastern detachment only knows that Yarmouth and London are in want of red herrings: and, finally, the eastern and western columns, uniting at the Land's End, rendezvous in the Atlantic, where they call their muster rolls, take an account of the killed and wounded, and return to a country where they are apparently unknown; to the polar ice. What can a man think of himself, or does he think at all, when he writes such stuff as this. If he had

possessed the faculty of thinking, but for one moment, he must have known that no human investigation could ascertain such a detail; that no one could even approach it, unless it were a herring secretary and historiographer, with a quire of paper in his hand and a pen and ink in his button-hole; and that it would be a hard task even to him. Yet thus this Mr. Anderson, and that good man Pennant, write: thus natural history, and other history than natural, are written; thus books are written, thus the world is filled with books, and thus the people read and believe; because it is printed.

It is likely enough that we may never acquire such a knowledge of the history of herrings as to lead to any useful practical results; as their political conduct, if not, properly speaking, capricious, is very irregular, and appears to be governed by circumstances which we may never be able to ascertain. But that is no reason for not making the attempt; and it is one in which an industrious naturalist might acquire some honour, and respecting which it would not be very difficult to accumulate some considerable store of facts. It is probable that, to a certain extent, the herring, like the pilchard, is migratory; but it is very certain that it does not breed exclusively in the Arctic Seas, as Mr. Pennant thinks, that it does not migrate in huge armies, "heaven directed," to our shores, that it does not, when it arrives there, take particular directions along the east and the west coasts, and that its appearance is not constant. It is not for me to attempt to enlighten this dark subject; but a few facts will, at any rate, serve the purpose of showing how much there is to be done.

Excepting the Swedish and Norwegian fisheries, which seem now to be at an end, there is little known about the breeding or existence of the herring in the

Northern Ocean: and, in the Arctic Seas, properly speaking, it does not appear that they have been ever remarked as particularly abundant. I cannot find that they have been ever seen in the proper icy seas. Generally, they have not been observed at all by the whale fishers and navigators of the higher regions, nor are they taken by the Greenlanders. It seems that they were first noticed on the western coasts of Sweden in 1740, when the Gotheburg fishery was established. Previously to 1790, they used also to be abundant on the coasts of Norway; but after that time they deserted it, and made their appearance at Marstrand. The Swedish fishery used to commence in November, and the produce was so abundant as, in the short space of three weeks, to amount to 600,000 barrels. Since that period, they have again deserted this coast.

So far are the herring shoals from being necessarily migratory to us, that there can be no question about their breeding on our own shores; though that circumstance, both as it relates to time and place, seems as variable and uncertain as every thing else that respects this most irregular fish. In 1699, it is well remembered that enormous heaps of herring spawn were thrown ashore in Orkney by a severe gale of wind; proving that, at that period at least, they bred in these islands. Since that time, however, and till within these two or three years, they seem to have deserted this coast; and the fishery is only at this very moment recommenced. Had they migrated from the north, they would necessarily have come annually, not only to Orkney, but to the Shetland Isles, where they are nearly unknown.

Their frequent change of haunts on the British coasts, is equally a proof that they have no fixed migrations; however difficult it may be to account for their changes of spawning places; if indeed they did spawn in many

of the situations where they used to be abundant. The Long Island was formerly one of the great resorts of herrings. So abundant was the produce of Loch Maddy alone, that, according to Martin, 400 sail have been loaded there in one season. In Charles the first's time, buildings were erected in this bay, and a fishery established: but the fish disappeared and the establishment was broken up. The Long Island has now been so long deserted by them, that it is scarcely remembered when they appeared last in any quantity.

As vulgar philosophy is never satisfied unless it can find a cause for every thing, this disappearance of the herring has been attributed to the manufacture of kelp. But kelp was not introduced for very many years after the herrings had left the Long Island, as well as many other coasts which they had frequented. It is also a popular belief that naval engagements, or even the firing of guns, cause them to change their haunts. Thus their desertion of Sweden was attributed to the battle of Copenhagen; and now, when guns are at peace, the steam boats are the "sufficient reason." The one reason is as valid as the other. It is a chance if there has been a gun fired in the Western Islands since the days of Cromwell, and they have shifted their quarters within that period many a time. They have long left Loch Hourn and Loch Torridon, where steam boats never yet smoked; and since the steam boat has chosen to go to Inveraray, they have also thought fit to prefer Loch Fyne to all the western bays. But theories like this have at least the merit of antiquity. Long before the days of gunpowder, the ancient Highlanders imagined that the fish deserted those coasts where blood had been shed; so that the gun hypothesis is only an old one revived, with the necessary modifications.

Besides their very marked and protracted desertion of

the Long Island, the shifting of the herrings on the west coast has been extremely frequent, both in point of place and season. In 1700, they were so abundant during the whole summer on the north-eastern coast of Sky, as to afford a steady and abundant fishery, and they were then believed to breed there. If Aaron Hill had been a better naturalist than he was a poet, he might have taught us something about them in those days. But it would be endless to enumerate all the changes which this side of the island has since experienced in that respect. It is a history that ought to be written; but it is not my business to write it here. Why does not the Fishery Board produce such a report; is it because it is a board. When the buildings mentioned in the beginning of this letter were erected, they abounded in all the north-western lochs. They afterwards deserted these haunts. At a subsequent season, the Sound of Sky was the great resort. At another time it was Loch Hourn and Loch Nevish. Then they vanished from these lochs and appeared elsewhere. For one summer, Loch Scavig was so full that there seemed as much fish as water in it; and Loch Fyne has been subject to incessant vacillations, although, on the whole, it seems to have retained their affections longer than any of the inlets to the northward. With these changes, the resort of the boats and vessels has necessarily changed from Sky to the Clyde. Within a few years, Portree, Rasay, Loch Hourn, Loch Fyne, and Loch Ransa, have been the great fishing stations; and thus Campbelltown, which depends much on this trade, has fluctuated between wealth and bankruptcy. It is evident, that in all these changes of resort there is no mark of a progress from the north. They seem always to be mere changes of haunt, for which no reason can at present be assigned; and they appear even more re-

markable when the state of the east coast fishery is considered.

Formerly, the west coast fishery took place early in the summer, when that on the east did not begin till this one was terminated. It was then thought that the fish had shifted their ground. But it is evident that this never was the case; as the fish were in a different state, and of a far inferior quality on the east side of the island. Lately, the fishery of the east coast has become so abundant as quite to have obscured the western; although, on both shores, the period of the fishery has been the same. In 1820, it was so abundant as to overstock the whole market, foreign as well as domestic, and to have produced considerable loss. Neither, in this case, is there any mark of a progress from the north; as the fishery sometimes commences soonest to the southward, while the season also changes, becoming, at present, later in each successive year. Thus, you see, if I have proved nothing else, I have proved that we know very little about the matter; and I need not therefore extend these remarks, as I might, to the Isle of Mann and the Yarmouth fisheries, which are equally unintelligible, or to that which recently has occurred in the spring of the year on the eastern and southern coasts of England, or lastly to that which takes place occasionally on the north coast of Cornwall.

But it is probable that, instead of being properly a migratory fish, the herring only approaches the shores from the deep surrounding seas; induced so to do, sometimes for the purpose of spawning, at others in pursuit of food; or possibly, driven in, on some occasions, by its enemies the larger fish that follow the shoals to prey on them.

The ancient Dutch fishing which was carried on, at

all seasons, far from shore, and our own present deep-sea fishery, prove that the herring is a permanent resident of all our seas, particularly to the northward. From the deep, it probably flocks to the shore, as the circumstances already mentioned may induce it; and, under so many motives, with others that are yet unknown to us, it is not surprising, either that its haunts or the periods of its appearance should vary. This latter circumstance is as variable as any other. Formerly, the west coast boat-fishing began early in the summer; latterly it became late; and, in the same way, it has been found to vary elsewhere.

As far as the approach of the herring to the shores is produced by the whales, grampuses, sharks, and other enemies which follow them, their visits may be considered as really regulated by accident, and their capricious appearance is therefore to be expected. Inasmuch as it depends on the choice of food, it must be regulated by the time and place where that is abundant; and the presence of the one is therefore implied in that of the other. Although it had not been remarked by the fishermen that the herring was most abundant in those seasons and places where the water was most luminous, we might have concluded that they made prey, not only of the Medusæ, but of the innumerable marine animals of other genera to which the water owes this appearance. Now the production of these is extremely variable, as well with respect to quantity as to time and place; and though it is only removing the difficulty from one set of beings to another, this variation is perhaps sufficient to account for many of the apparent caprices of the herrings. Though their spawning should be constant both in time and place, they cannot remain where food has not been provided for them, but must seek it wherever it is to be

found. There are many seasons, I need scarcely say, when the waters in some particular spot are crowded with the several marine worms which appear to form a part, at least, of their food, and there are others when not one is to be seen; and it is probable that the fishermen might find advantages in following these indications, which they now neglect.

There have been as many opinions about the spawning of herrings as about every other part of their history; and although it is by no means yet elucidated, it is certain that they do not spawn necessarily in the northern ocean, any more than that the full grown ones migrate from there. I have said already, that one of the motives for their approach to the shores, seems to be the purpose of spawning: and that this, sometimes at least, is performed in the very lochs where they are taken, is certain. It is probable that if a contrary opinion had not so long prevailed, that if the smaller meshed nets had not been disused, and that if more attention had been paid to the subject, the whole of this important part of their history would by this time have been well understood. I already mentioned that their spawn had been thrown ashore formerly in Orkney. It is now also well known to the west coast fishermen that it abounds in the season in the western lochs, that it forms a great part of the food of the larger fish on this coast, and that it is devoured in abundance by the smaller kinds of sea birds. Herrings of all sizes may also be taken with small nets; proving that they continue, even to the period of their full growth, to haunt the seas where they were produced. The spawn of this fish is also known to be found around the Isle of Mann.

Thus then we may consider it as established, that the western coast, at least, is the breeding place of the her-

ring, as the surrounding seas are its constant residence. That, when grown large enough, they should quit the breeding places and take to the sea, is a natural consequence of crowds and want of food. Whether they thus spawn on the eastern coast of Scotland also, I do not know, being less intimate with that side of the island.

There is considerable obscurity about the season of spawning. If it does not occur more than once, it must take place at different periods on different shores; as there is no other way of accounting for their different condition as to fulness, in different situations at the same season. It is a very important question as it relates to the fisheries; on account of the great difference in the goodness of the fish, according to the different conditions in this respect in which it may happen to be. The observations hitherto made on this subject, have not been such as to allow any general conclusion to be drawn, as far as I am aware; although if the fishermen were inclined to take sufficient notice, there would probably not be much difficulty in discovering the truth: but, on the western coast, it is well known that the fish is almost always in a much higher state of feeding than on the eastern. It must be expected that they should be better when taken some time before the spawn is full grown: when that has been deposited, and for some little time after, they are proverbially worthless; as Falstaff will tell you. It is probable that, independently of this, the superior quality of the western herrings arises from more abundant or different food; as, even when taken in precisely the same condition, they are so far superior to the eastern, as scarcely to resemble them in flavour or goodness. This may probably be added to the evidence already given to prove that no migration of herrings takes place, not even between the two coasts; as the nature of

the fish is so decidedly different. To add to the confusion respecting the spawning and consequent condition of the herring, they are sometimes taken together in all conditions: an accident which may possibly, however, arise from differences of age in an animal, of the period of whose life we are ignorant.

There is one circumstance respecting the herring, still worthy of notice, and which equally serves as an argument against their migrations from the northward. When they first appear on the western coast, they are not in shoals, but are so scattered that they cannot be taken by the net in the ordinary way. At this time they may be caught by a fly or a feather, or even a bright tinned hook; forming a very amusing kind of fishery as well as a profitable occupation; as one man has been known to take a barrel and a half, or about 1200 fish, during the few days this fishery lasts. After spawning, when they are again dispersed, they are sometimes also taken in this manner.

The herring fishery of Scotland, so long a subject of anxiety, and speculation, and regulation, has now arrived at a state even somewhat more extended than was so long wished and so long despaired of; since it has at this moment (1820) overstocked the market. The profits made out of it by the Dutch in the seventeenth century, excited the jealousy of their neighbours; while the difficulty which we found in coping with them in that field, gave rise to as much nonsense as ever was written, among those who forgot that the large population of Holland was compelled to take up this employment for want of other outlets for its industry, and that the capital and industry of Britain were fully, and much more agreeably, as well as more profitably, occupied. The principal Acts of Parliament on this subject were passed in

Charles the second's time, particularly after 1672; and seem to have been as much dictated by a spirit of jealousy as by a desire of gain. In 1748, the system of bounties commenced; and under fluctuations in the quantity of these, the herring fishery first rose and then again declined. During both the American and the last war, it was at a low ebb, for reasons that ought to be sufficiently obvious to an economist; although our politicians do not seem to have considered that neither industry nor capital was likely to be employed in a somewhat new, precarious, and disagreeable trade, when there were abundant demands on them from so many other quarters. In 1808, the act granting three pounds a ton bounty on busses, and two shillings a barrel on the fish, was passed, whether the latter was taken in busses or boats. The raising of the barrel bounty to four shillings in 1815, and the admission of rock salt in 1817, completed those regulations under which they are now flourishing; although to these must also be added the mesh regulation, and the distinction of herrings cured by bleeding and gutting in the Dutch manner; under which process, when carefully followed, the fish of Scotland have been found to equal these in goodness, and to compete with them now in the foreign markets. A progressive increase in the quantity taken, has thus been going on, from 1816 till the present moment (1820); the quantity gutted before curing, and thus entitled to the full bounty, having also increased at the same time. But it is worth while to remark, that the increase has taken place principally, if not entirely, in consequence of the increased number of small craft, or of the extension of the boat fishing, which has been found so much more profitable and economical than that carried on in

busses, that, even with the advantage of the bounty, the latter is very little pursued at present.

There is no doubt that the regulations of the Legislature and the discernment and activity of the Commissioners of the fisheries and their allies, have been a main cause of this success; but it must also be recollected, that these have been much aided by contingent circumstances which have been kept out of view; a reconsideration of which may perhaps lead our legislators in time to reflect, if they will take the trouble of reflecting, that high bounties, if any, cannot much longer be necessary. Circumstances have changed. To capital seeking for employment since the war, and to an increasing and insufficiently employed population, particularly among the maritime inhabitants of Britain, must be added those new regulations in the system of occupying land in the Highlands, which have not only driven the inhabitants to the sea shores, but have held out to them a new opening for their industry, which their wants compel them to follow, if they would not starve. It is thus chiefly, that the boat fishery has gained ground; and that while our commerce has increased in this quarter, not only has employment been found for an unoccupied people, but the rents of Highland estates have been so materially encreased. Let those who have raised their idle clamour against the new distribution of Highland estates, consider this: for though, from ignorance and shortsightedness, it has been kept out of view, it is one of the important results which has followed from these changes; forming not a small integer in the general mass of beneficial consequences.

The salt laws have been a fruitful cause of discontent, as might be expected; yet that they were not a cause

of the languishing state of the fisheries, is certain, since they did not exist when the complaints respecting this were the most loud. It is obvious that where the duty was so enormous in proportion to the value of the article, strict regulations were always, and are still, necessary; not only to prevent smuggling, but for the purpose of limiting the duty-freed article to the uses intended by the Legislature. Yet these are not so rigidly administered as to prevent the Highlanders, and the fishers in general, from using this free salt for all domestic purposes. Certainly no anxiety has been wanting to render the inconveniences arising from the salt regulations as little oppressive as possible; although no politician could hope to prevent complaint by any degree of care. In the established fisheries, they are productive of no inconvenience whatever. In the case of the small fisherman, they are unquestionably inconvenient, and sometimes a serious impediment to his industry; while he has not, in the remote districts, ready access to a salt market, and cannot afford to keep a stock on hand. To remove these duties is, perhaps, as a question of revenue, impossible; however the community, and particularly that portion of it, might benefit by the change. To diminish the inconveniences, has been, and appears still to be, the constant desire of the Legislature; and it does not therefore merit the odium which is so often thrown on it, since it has always shown itself ready to adopt any reasonable suggestion. If a commercial system should still continue to spread throughout the Highlands, as it has long been doing and may yet be expected to do, the inconveniences will diminish at the same time; as the small fisherman will then have that access to a market for salt, the want of which is now the chief source of the difficulties under which he suffers.

If there is a cause yet that prevents the herring fishery, and, I may add, the fisheries in general, from being so productive as they might be, since the supply offered by nature is inexhaustible, it must be sought in another quarter. The chief obstacle, it may seem extraordinary to say, in the present state of the people and the unquestionable poverty of a large proportion of them, is an overstocked market. The fishermen themselves are convinced that the people will not eat salt fish; and thus they account for that limited demand which so often checks their operations; while, as in all similar cases, the uncertainty of this demand keeps the supply down rather below that quantity which would find a sale. As far as relates to them, we must acknowledge the truth of the general principle, and the policy of their conduct for their own interests; as it is proper that demand should both precede and exceed supply, though it is not absolutely necessary that a Dutch planter should make a thousand per cent. on his capital, rather than that all the world should have nutmeg in their negus.

But it is not very easy to admit this theory as it relates to the consumption of fish. Wherever the people at large, omitting perhaps the very luxurious lower classes of England, commonly and improperly called poor, have free access to fish at moderate prices, they express no dislike to it; and, on the contrary, in all maritime situations, it forms a large portion of their food. The cause must rather be sought in some defect, on this point, in the interior commercial arrangements of the country, and the consequent want of a steady demand for an article, of the existence of which, partly from that cause, partly from general ignorance, and partly from want of habit, the people at large are unaware, or forgetful. To diffuse that knowledge and that habit, is

not perhaps in the power of the people themselves; nor are any efforts made towards it, even by our monstrous charitable establishments, within whose province it would seem particularly to lie. Could such a demand be once excited and rendered steady, there is no question but that the fisheries would increase in proportion; and that, no longer checked by their frequent losses on a perishable commodity of precarious sale, the fishermen would increase their supply to any extent that might be required. It must always be recollected, that before commerce can flourish in any of its ten thousand branches, there must not only be a demand prepared, but that this must be such as the capitalist can rely on.

Considering our peculiarly maritime situation and the inexhaustible supply which our seas afford, and even independently of the present question, it has been a singularly unfortunate circumstance that those who framed the new model for our Reformed Church, had not been economists, and persons of more general views. In retaining, as they did, from the Mother which they quitted, such practices as were deemed indifferent on the great questions, and which served to draw a line short of the extremity of reform, they might easily have preserved, at least the weekly fast, which, as a question of distinctions, was an indifferent one, but the adoption of which would have been highly beneficial in this very view. To what an useful extent that might have operated, it is scarcely necessary to say; when, even now, as the basis of a branch of commerce to catholic countries, the fasts of that Church are so valuable to us. But I must not engage you in a treatise on a subject, far too lengthy, as Jonathan says, for a letter like this.

That I may end it before you are weary, I shall terminate my visit to Tanera, and its consequences, with a

few extracts from the official Reports respecting the recent increase of the Scottish herring fishery, and the present relative state of the east and west coasts as to the supply; because they are necessary illustrations of some of these points. In 1815, there were about 160,000 barrels cured; and, in 1816, they increased nearly to 163,000. In 1817, the increase was to 192,000; and in 1818, it was nearly 228,000. In 1819, it had advanced to 326,000; and it had so far augmented on this in 1820, as to have left a great many on hand; producing much eventual loss to the capitalists. The relative produce of the east and west coasts in 1819, appears to have been 325,700 for the former, and 81,600 for the latter; but as Glasgow with Greenock and Rothsay stand for about 53,000 of this latter total, and as these vessels buy from the small boats on the east as well as the west coast, it is probable that not less than two thirds of this proportion were taken on the east and not on the west coast; making the proportion of the former fishery to the latter as 280 to 45 nearly. It is remarkable that this east coast fishery was very trifling ten years ago; and that the great increase has been the consequence, in a good measure, of the new distribution of the people on the Sutherland estate, against the cruelty and impolicy of which so much has been urged. Before that period, the eastern fishery was limited almost to Wick; which, even now, furnished 21,000 of the average produce of 1819. I ought to add that the weight of the herring barrel stands between 120 and 130 pounds, and that the number of fish averages about 800. The exportation of white herrings having been about 227,000 barrels in 1819, there remain about 108,500 for home consumption, making about eighty-seven millions of fish. Taking the nearest round numbers, as it is unnecessary to be very accurate,

and allowing only two herrings a day for an adult, this is the annual supply of a proportion of animal food for little more than 119,000 individuals. But it is scarcely a sufficient supply for 40,000 persons. It is hardly necessary to point out the extremely trifling consumption implied in such a demand as this for the home market, where the supply seems to be illimitable. Nor is it necessary to shew how much may yet be done towards increasing the food of the people, when the circulation of food among the community shall be better understood. That the poor of this country should want animal food in 1820, with a market glutted with herrings to the ruin of the proprietors, is not one of the least curious problems in the practical part of that science on which we do not want more than enough of speculative writers.

LOCH INVER, SUIL VEINN, FAIRIES, COUL BEG.

THERE is nothing more grievous or more delightful, just as it may happen, than the nature of the weather which befals a traveller; whether that be foul or fair. In this occupation, more than in any thing, it turns the scale between good and evil. There is nothing also, which, if he keeps a journal, he sets down in his note-book with greater inveteracy of anger or more keenness of delight; fancying that he will hereafter read it with the same warmth of feeling as he noted it. But the storms disperse and the rain is dried; keen recollections of pain, and — keen recollections of pleasure too, fade from his mind; and, in a few short months, it becomes a matter of indifference whether the record of his journal be the record of tempest or sunshine, of pain or pleasure.

In spelling the few pages that remained of my own log-book, when I was trying to brush up my recollections of moving adventures and more moving remarks, by the method of concatenated associations, I found— "Rain."—"A gale of wind and rain."—"Rain, wind, fog, and mist."—"Urceatim pluebat, (Petronius, as Dr. Pangloss says)."—"Two reefs in the mainsail, rain."—"Rain; set the fifth jib and the trysail."—"A heavy gale; thick rain; close hauled."—"Right a-head; raining like ——; beating all day to windward;"—and so on, for a month. Yet so it is; the other matters have come to the surface, and had it not been for the log book,

I might have sought long for the meteorology which cost me many a grievous groan, and some other things for which I plead the example of Plato; things not to be told. The learned know where to seek them.

The great disadvantage of rain in these cases, is the time which it occupies. If Time is the great devourer of all things, edax rerum, he in his turn is eaten up by rain. It is like the case of Stephen and Time; Jupiter Pluvius returns the compliment to his father Chronos. These weeping skies are the crying evil of a mountainous country; at least to the unlucky traveller; since they "shorten the time for his behove" most sadly. He who means to make a week's tour on the west coast, must allow two months for it; and if he is on board of a ship, unless indeed the rain and the head winds choose to come together, he may allow half of the remainder for beating in sight of his port, and for longing to be on shore doing what he came to do. No one knows the power of rain who has not tried it in these circumstances. In a town, the business of life goes on pretty much the same in foul or fair: in travelling, unless we travel only to eat and sleep, nature, art, every thing, vanish and disappear; and all our senses, observation, judgment, every thing, vanish with them.

Nature has done all things for the best; of course; and it is very ingeniously contrived that as mountains quickly dry, they should never have an opportunity of drying; to the great consolation of sheep and cows. But it is plain that she is no judge of her own beauties, or has very little ambition to be admired; a point in which she differs somewhat from the rest of her sex. Else she would not have so managed as to have reserved nine tenths of them for countries where we can neither see them nor enjoy them; making herself a perfect felo de se,

on this point. Is it that all our good things here below are to be qualified by a counterpoising dose of evil, lest we should enjoy ourselves too much. Why will she not rain where there is nothing to be seen; and why have we not the command which gave the philosopher in Rasselas so much uneasiness. But the Italian curate has answered this question: and Menippus, who had the start of him, better still.

Thus we left Tanera, thus we reached Loch Inver; thus we left Loch Inver, thus I ascended Coul Beg, thus I returned to Loch Inver; and thus I discovered that if we had no clothes, rain would be no inconvenience: the thing itself, bare, unadulterated, forked man cares not; as John Macdonald and I experienced. But at last we were at anchor in Loch Inver, and it was not raining. Yet, fair or foul, it would not be easy to find a more dolorous-looking country than is all this rocky division of Ross and Sutherland. Of trees, houses, or cultivation, there is not, of course, a suggestion or a recollection: there is not even a hint of the possibility of such a thing; and though a Highland town is never a very enticing object, we learn here to long wistfully for any thing that looks like "biggit land." The ground beneath our feet is either a rock to scramble over, a villainous, rough, heathy, driech, moor, to labour over, a collection of bog upon bog to jump over and over, or a pool as big as a moderate lake that we cannot get over at all. Above head, there is rain, little or big, or fog, or clouds, or drizzle and blast that feels like a shower of pepper; or the whole compounded together into one mess, with a gale of wind into the bargain. Round about, there are four mountains, which seem as if they had tumbled down from the clouds; having nothing to do with the country or each other, either in shape, materials, position, or cha-

racter, and which look very much as if they were wondering how they got there. Which of them all is the most rocky and useless, is probably known to the sheep: human organs distinguish little but stone: black precipices when the storm and the rain are drifting by, and, when the sun shines, cold bright summits that seem to rival the snow.

Suil Veinn loses no part of its strangely incongruous character on a near approach. It remains as lofty, as independent, and as much like a sugar loaf, (really not metaphorically,) when at its foot as when far off at sea. In one respect it gains; or rather the spectator does, by a more intimate acquaintance. It might have been covered with grass, to the imagination; but the eye sees and the hand feels that it is rock, above, below, and round about. The narrow front, that which possesses the conical outline, has the air of a precipice, although not rigidly so: since it consists of a series of rocky cliffs piled in terraced succession above each other; the grassy surfaces of which being invisible from beneath, the whole seems one rude and broken cliff, rising, suddenly and abruptly, from the irregular table land below, to the height of a thousand feet. The effect of a mountain thus seen, is always striking; because, towering aloft into the sky, it fills the eye and the imagination. Here, it is doubly impressive, from the wide and open range around, in the midst of which this gigantic mass stands alone and unrivalled; a solitary and enormous beacon, rising to the clouds from the far-extended ocean-like waste of rocks and rudeness.

The conical appearance of Suil Veinn vanishes on a side view. Thus seen, it displays a prolonged ridge with an irregular summit: but the sides all around are precipitous, like the western extremity; and, at the east end,

it terminates in a similar manner; looking wide over an open rocky country, and thus preserving its independence in every part. This lateral outline is varied and graceful; the whole mountain, in every direction, presenting an object no less picturesque than it is uncommon and striking in effect. Combining, in some positions, with the distant and elegant forms of Canasp, Coul Beg, and Ben More, it also offers more variety than would be expected; while even the general landscape is varied by the multiplicity of rocks and small lakes with which the whole country is interspersed. The total altitude from the sea line, is probably about 2500 feet; the table land whence this and most other of the mountains of this coast rise, appearing to have an extreme elevation of 1500. To almost all but the shepherds, Suil Veinn is inaccessible: one of our sailors, well used to climbing, reached the summit with difficulty, and had much more in descending. Sheep scramble about it in search of the grass that grows in the intervals of the rocks: but so perilous is this trade to them, that this mountain with its pasture, which, notwithstanding its rocky aspect, is considerable, is a negative possession; causing a deduction of fifteen or twenty pounds a year from the value of the farm to which it belongs, instead of adding to its rent.

We were returning, well wearied, over a wide and open piece of moor, many miles from any habitation, when my aid-de-camp, John Macdonald, suddenly exclaimed, "hey, what a bonnie lassie." I looked up, but saw no lassie; nothing but the open bare moor, though it was broad daylight and John was certainly wide awake. I asked for the lassie: he had lost sight of her, he said, behind "that bush." There was nothing bigger, of the nature of a bush, than a few stunted plants of heath and juniper, which would not have concealed a girl of

nine or ten years old, as he averred this object to be. We nevertheless beat all the bushes round, as if we had been searching for a hare, but to no purpose. John seemed half inclined to believe that he had seen a Fairy; he had probably been walking in his sleep, and dreaming erect.

It is often very difficult to know what to believe, in this world of doubts and deceptions; and after ten summers spent in wandering among Highland hills and glens, amidst their mists and storms, in the very heart and centre of old romance, I have come away without knowing whether to believe in fairies and other of the fraternity of Elves, or not: not doubting about my own belief, I should however say, but uncertain whether others believe. If we could trust an assertion because it is in print, as the vulgar do, we should be compelled to credit that the Highlanders still reside in a land of shadows, that they yet believe in Brownies and Fairies, and in all the poetical population which has been alternately the delight and terror of the younger days of many of us, and of even the older ones of our ancestors. But of those who would thus instruct us, there are some who write for effect, others who suffer their pens or imaginations to run away with them, a few who are desirous that we should believe what they do not themselves credit, and a fourth set who, knowing the country only in books and tradition, repeat, as of to-day, manners and opinions long past away. That Seers have pretended to see Fairies, is not a species of testimony which will command much respect. That nine-tenths indeed of all this is utterly groundless, I am fully convinced; nor would it now be any praise to a people, rapidly becoming enlightened as they are naturally acute, to suppose that they are not fast forgetting the follies that belong to the childhood of nations, to an age of barbarism. Still, I have, myself,

met with just enough to prove that the relics of these ages of adult infancy remain; and that, among the past superstitions, or rather philosophy, of the æra of credulity, there are yet some keeping their holds over the imaginations of a few individuals. It is not the character of the country: but instances can always be found on which to build a general assertion, by those who take pride or pleasure in promulgating such a belief. It is not peculiar to these psychologists to generalize from partial or solitary instances; since it is of the very essence and nature of all philosophers so to do. They need not, therefore, care for a remark which they share with all the great and wise of the earth. To say, as has been said, that the Highlanders carefully conceal their belief in the supernatural invisible world, is to make an ingenious provision for all possible doubts on this head: but it is one that will not convert these into conviction. If I have been less fortunate than others in my investigations, I have, to say truth, a shrewd suspicion that we must come to the task "willing to believe," as Dr. Johnson says; or, as not a less great character observes, there must at least be "a permission of the will." If you may have thus lost some of the amusement which I might have collected for you, there are none who can better dispense with it, and none to whom it is likely to have offered less novelty. To myself, I must own, it has been a source of disappointment. Scottish or English, Danish, or German, or Tartarian, I also have read, with delight, the lucubrations of the master spirits of the shadowy world, and shall continue to read as long as my spectacles shall serve. I could almost indeed sit down at the foot of Suil Veinn, and cry to think that "the Elf quene with hire joly compagnie, danceth no more in the grene mede," and that we have, in these latter days, been philosophised out of half our pleasures.

To doubt that such things have been, whether they may now be or not, would, in me, be most ungrateful: when one of my own worthy ancestors was himself rescued by the Little Men in Green, as you yourself well know, from an event which has always been esteemed peculiarly critical of a man's fate. . .

You must not therefore suppose me so wanting, either in gratitude, affection, or industry, as not to have laboured to collect all that I could on this subject. But I have found nothing new or important; nothing in which the Highland Fairy differs so far from her fraternity elsewhere, as to merit what would, in fact, be only a repetition of things a thousand times told. Yet the Elfin creed of the Highlanders demands a remark or two. It has been the fate of Morgiana, Mab, Titania, Oberon, and the rest, to have undergone serious variations of character in the numerous hands through which they have passed; as is well known to all those who are read in Fairy lore. If the delicate and inoffensive Sylph Peri of Persia is the Queen Mother, the Titania of her race, her brood has suffered numerous transmutations, and too often a woeful degeneration. But such is the necessary fate of popular tales and creeds; taking their colour as they spread, from the characters of the people into whose hands they pass, and from a thousand local circumstances of country, occupation, religion, and what not. Our Teutonic ancestors seem to have preserved in their present countries, the several distinctions of the Elf race with greater purity than ourselves; as they have also been most attentive or fortunate in preserving their ancient tales. That we have confounded the Fairies with the other races of spiritual beings, with the evil demons or Dives of the same ancient origin, is evident from the mischievous or wicked pranks in which we find them en-

gaged. Thus, in quitting their oriental abode, they have often lost their caste; becoming child stealers, cattle slayers, and so on; and often also assuming the trades of other beings; working in mines, riding horses to death, fighting under the command of Major-General Hellequin, and much more which I need not detail. Worst of all, they have been exorcised and sent to Old Nikar or Pluto, as if they were his militia; and even their birth and parentage have been calumniated, as if they had been the pernicious progeny of Succubi. Shakspeare and Chaucer are somewhat at variance on this point.

But our Highland friends, as far as I can perceive, have made greater confusion still. They are here, water spirits, and pucks, and witches, and even giants and magicians. That they do and did actually possess a worse character in Scotland than in England, is I believe admitted; and, if I mistake not, you have somewhere made that remark yourself. But I suspect that the confusion to which I here allude, is not genuine or orthodox; nor, I believe I may add, ancient. Unfortunately, the Highlanders have neglected to collect these creeds till it has become too late; and hence, while we are but ill informed respecting what was believed when that would have been worth knowing, we must now put up with the confused traditions which have been the natural result of the wearing out of these opinions. There is a vulgarity, as well as an inconsistency, in the greater part of what we now hear on this subject, which proves that the knowledge, like the belief, is declining, and which almost robs these tales and fancies of all their interest. I know not if a critical and judicious Gaelic antiquary might not yet collect much that is worth recording. But he who attempts this, must bring knowledge and reading to the task of selection, as well as industry to that of collecting; while it

is full time that he should begin, lest half a century, or less, should render that which is now difficult, impossible. How desirable it is that this should be done, and done well, I need not here say; as I have had occasion to point it out more particularly in another place. Nor could I say any thing on this subject which would not be as trite as, to you, it would be superfluous.

But the Daoine Shee require yet a postscript; and, like a lady's postscript, this will prove the most valuable part of the discussion; being a new and true theory of Fairies. They are the Druids; of whom, and of whose mysterious and mystical rites and philosophical knowledge, we have heard enough, and more. It is said, in the first place, that on or after the introduction of Christianity, these persons concealed themselves in caverns under ground, whence they made creaghs to carry away women, (with whom, by the way, they had no business,) and cattle, or other necessaries. This is gravely stated as a known fact; and then, it is added, the vulgar continue to believe that they are still inhabiting these ancient abodes under green mounts, rendered invisible by their magic arts. Thus, by a slight confusion of ideas, the Fairies and the Druids are the same people; and really l'un vaut bien l'autre. How the aerial, flaxen-haired, tender, delicate, and playful, though capricious Elf, could be mistaken for a black-a-vized, Malay-headed, gloomy, skinny, dingy Druid, is a point which this theory has not elucidated. When once an antiquary gets himself mounted upon a Druid, it is impossible to conjecture where he will go and when he will stop. Mazeppa is nothing to him: but the Druidosopher is a wilful rider, and his steed must carry him, whether it choose or not, from Persia to Gaul, and thence even to Fairy land. Green was the favourite colour of the Druids, and it is also

that of the Fairies: Fairies are supposed to live under green mounts; and "it is probable" that the Druids did the same, when they were put out of fashion, or out of the pale of civil society, by the "Fingalian Dynasty." Thus Druids and Fairies are the same thing; thus the demonstration is perfected; and consequently the Druids are still in existence, since it is here also proved that the Highlanders still see Fairies. I hope you admire the mathematical ingenuity of this proof. A green coat multiplied into a possibility that the Druids, (who possibly did not exist in Scotland,) lived under ground, multiplied again into the "Fingalian dynasty," which certainly never did exist, proves, not only the point to be proved, but somewhat too much. Justly have the Druids been put down by the "Fingalian dynasty" for their magical arts; when, at the distance of two thousand years, their incantations can thus twist the ratiocinating faculties of reasonable, well-read, well-educated, sober-minded, personages.

Though this most ingenious hypothesis, by which two dynasties are fixed on their thrones at one blow, (though it must still remain a moot point whether the Druids are thus become visionary and gasiform, or the Fairies corporeal and tangible,) has been proposed with Shandean gravity, we must suppose it to be what is vulgarly called a hoax or a quiz, imitated from Hobbes. He, you may remember, draws an ingenious comparison between the church of Rome and the Fairy kingdom: but I cannot quote him, as I dare say that Leviathan himself is much nearer to your elbow than he is just now to mine: he could not well be much further than from Suil Veinn to London. Quote him, indeed, I should not dare; for I remember that he says, "as fairies have no existence but in the fancies of old wives or old poets," a very indecorous

remark, it must be allowed, and highly improper to be entertained.

The Fathers of the Church, however, had a theory of a very different nature from both. Hobbes would have made their hair stand on end. The Fairies were held to be demons; evil demons: devils of the kith and kin of Satan. So do orthodoxies vary. The proof is ingenious, consisting in the method of dilemma. They could not be angels, are not men, and must therefore be devils, the produce of Incubi, and worthy of all denunciation: Q. E. D. Unless indeed, which the Church forgot, they were prehuman personages, a purer offspring of Adam and his cabalistic wife Lilis.

Let the above-quoted ingenious philosopher, and Hobbes, and the Fathers, settle this matter in the best way they can. Let wives and poets, old or young, go on believing or fancying as they may: it is very silly to be always analyzing or philosophizing: hunting after truth at the expense of our happiness. As if we lived in a world of realities, or as if realities had any thing to do with happiness or with pleasure: as if we did not live in a magic lantern, where things, come like shadows, so depart. The wise man admits them all if they have any thing good to bring; he cherishes and detains them as long as he can; and poets, like you and the rest, kindly give them a body, and nail them down, like butterflies in boxes, for the regale of those whose minute "particula auræ," weighed down to the ground by the investing clod, would attempt in vain to catch the flying specimen. He is but a silly lout who does not believe in Valentine and Orson, in Loretto and in St. Denys; who crooks his nose at tales of anthropophagi and heroes, of virtue, generosity, chimeras, patriotism, and of men whose heads do grow beneath their shoulders. Let such a man be sent

back to his pons asinorum and his x y = a: he is only fit for a mathematician. When the gale is raging around, and sea and sky are intermingled in hideous commotion, the analyst lashes himself to the quarter-rail and says it is only a black cliff and a cloud: is it not better to shut the critical eye and view the ghost riding dark in the storm.

Such was my own folly here, even yesterday, when the thunder was rolling above head, and when the water below was blowing up in sheets of white showers to the clouds, which, opening their heavy leaden masses to the blue darts of the lightning, displayed at every flash the terrific Peak of Coul Beg, striding dark, like the gigantic spirit of the tempest, on the mountain, and shrouding its lofty head in the troubled wreaths of livid vapour that were whirling round it. It was indeed a fearful storm; for it caught us so suddenly with every sail set, that it had nearly laid us on our beam ends. The gaff topsail became entangled, and could not be taken in for some time; and in the mean while, though the foresail was hauled down and the main tack clewed up, it was a hard matter to persuade our vessel to right again. Your friend Daniell passed under our stern in the commotion; and made a narrow escape of becoming somewhat more intimate with the sea than was necessary for his aquatintas.

The whole of this coast, from Coycraig in Assynt as far as Ben More at Loch Broom, presents a most singular mountain outline; but Coul Beg is even more remarkable than Suil Veinn, while its form is more elegant and versatile. In every view, it is as graceful and majestic as it is singular; and, like the other mountains of this extraordinary shore, it has every advantage that can arise from independence of position; rising, a huge and solitary cone, from the high land beneath, and lifting its dark

precipice in unattended majesty to the clouds. The ascent from the shore to the base of the rocky cone, is long and tedious, over a land of lakes and rocks; but, beyond that, there is no access. All around is barrenness and desertion; except where some lake, glittering bright in the sunshine, gives life, a still life, to the scene: and the eye ranges far and wide over the land, seeing nothing but the white quartz summits of Canasp, Coycraig, and Ben More, the long streams of stones that descend from their sides, and the brown waste of heath around, interspersed with grey protruding rocks that would elsewhere be hills, and with numerous lakes that seem but pools amidst the spacious desert.

The immediate sea shores along this coast, including Loch Enart and Loch Inver, offer nothing picturesque or interesting, even from Loch Broom to Assynt. Islands, bays, and headlands, there are, without end, from the Ru More to the Ru Storr; but not a feature to distinguish one from another, nor a cliff nor a promontory to tempt a moment's stay. Dreary and deserted, stony and bare and brown, like the skeleton of the earth, every thing repels investigation. The sea line has no beauty; the land is a melancholy waste; and if we ascend the mountain top, it is but to add waste to waste, and to spread the circle of the repulsive and monotonous desert. "In idel, as men say, ye nothing make, But, Lord, these grisly fendy rockes blake, That semen rather a foule confusion Of work than any fair creation," would make us remonstrate with Nature, even without the cause which Dorigene, or Gay's deploring damsel had. But for the mountains already mentioned, no part of Scotland could well present any thing less attractive and more hopeless.

KYLESCUAGH, ASSYNT, LOCH LAXFORD, LOCH INCHARD, HANDA, CAPE RATH, DIURNESS, STACK AND SKERRY, LOCH ERIBOL.

THE Pinnacle which stands off the Ru Storr, is the only remarkable object on a coast which, though rocky and rude, is uninteresting. The form of this detached mass is very graceful, and the altitude appears to be about two hundred feet. Being formed of sandstone, it has the air of gigantic masonry; the strata resembling huge blocks piled on each other. Loch Assynt, or Kylescuagh, is, at its entrance, a spacious bay, full of low rocky islands; wild and desolate, without beauty. The entrance into the interior loch is tortuous, and it is divided into two branches; that one which enters Glen Dhu being the wildest and the most striking, though we seek for picturesque beauty in vain.

I had great difficulty in finding Unapil, which was represented as a town, as another Ullapool; not then recollecting that most of the ancient Highland towns were, very much like the Russian ones, little more than a name. At length, after six hours rowing about all these solitary creeks, we discovered half a dozen dunghills buried under the lee of a high bank. It was Unapil. There is a wild road hence, to the fresh water lake, Loch Assynt, the place where Mr. Joplin's marble quarries were wrought; but which, fashion not chusing to patronize them, have been since abandoned. This is a pleasing green valley, and the ruins of an ancient castle situated on an island in

the lake, though insignificant, give it a character rarely found in this abandoned country. A calcareous soil renders it productive of some of the rarer plants, chiefly Orchideæ; so that both the mineralogist and the botanist may amuse themselves for a few hours, should such persons ever wander this way. At Lead Beg, I found the cottages built of bright white marble: the walls forming a strange contrast with the smoke and dirt inside, the black thatch, the dubs, the midden, and the peat stacks. This marble has not succeeded in attaining a higher dignity.

Scourie is a poor village: but the mountain called the Stack is remarkable for its regularly conical outline; forming an elegant object. The surrounding country is a melancholy mixture of lakes, rocks, and bogs, the general effect of which is as disagreeable as can well be imagined. And yet this air of misery and desolation should be sought for in the sky rather than on the earth: it is all the effect of climate. When we fairly examine these little lakes, and all those minute details of rock and bank and stream connected with them, there is not one that is not beautiful, or which, at least, does not contain the fundamentals of beauty. Did the sun shine here, and were the surface covered with grass and wild shrubs, instead of being black with peat and rushes, and were there trees to dispose of as we pleased, I know not of such a collection of little paradises as might be made out of this very country. Nature, I know not why, seems to have reserved her chief beauties for places where she is quite sure they can never be improved or enjoyed.

Loch More, situated still further eastward, is a considerable piece of water lying between high mountains, but of no decided or remarkable character. But the most striking feature in this part of Sutherland, is the long ridge of quartz hills through which lies the pass of Bal-

loch nan fey, whence this mountain derives its name. The arid effect of these summits is even greater than that of Canasp; as they expose a far greater surface of bare white rock, shining in the sun with such brightness as to remind us of snow, at least when that is not present to contrast it with: but no one, in any circumstances, can really mistake the colour of snow. This is what Pennant mistook for white marble, as I have remarked elsewhere; and probably what the other traveller, then noticed, has exaggerated into mountains of "naked white marble resembling the ice mountains of the polar sea."

To traverse Sutherland, hence, in any direction, is to undergo hunger and fatigue, rain, and wind, and bog, and misery, and disappointment. And after having thus turmoiled, I cannot even extract an entertaining paragraph out of the whole. The only impression which it has left, is that of weariness, hunger, and detestation. Perhaps I thought worse of it than it deserved, because I was compelled to examine it: "Yet if thilk bon eunto his tail thou tie;" but I believe it is really very bad. The coast northward is deeply intersected by the two inlets, Loch Laxford and Loch Inchard; both of them intricate, rude, rocky, and wild, without much other attraction than those which such a savage character always produces. Laxford is celebrated for its salmon, as its Norwegian name should indicate; and where the river first joins the sea, the scenery is not unpleasing. The small island of Handa, situated between this inlet and Scourie, is one of the great feathered cities of the North. Being a stratified sandstone, with projecting shelves, the puffins and auks, when drawn up on them in long ranks, present a most ornamental appearance; their brilliant white breasts resembling, at a little distance, edgings of daisies or rows of snow-drops. On one side of this island there is a fun-

nel, resembling the Bullers of Buchan, but on a much smaller scale. I was much struck here with the deception as to the supposed distance, which is produced by this high land, when at sea. The mate had fired a musket; and a cloud of substances rising, he imagined that his shot had feathered a whole flock of gannets. It was the birds themselves; which looked as if a feather bed had been opened and shook in the breeze.

Loch Inchard is not absolutely wanting in picturesque beauty, particularly on the northern side; though the further extremity is very desolate and bare. Inland, a small and pleasing fresh-water lake communicates, by a wild river of a very short course, with the sea; and further north there are two more, but quite void of beauty. One of them, however, North Sandwood Loch, lying close on the sea margin, is remarkable, as being formed entirely by blown sand; which, having obstructed a small bay, has excluded the sea and converted it into a fresh-water lake. The remainder of this tract, even to Cape Rath, though lofty and hilly, has all the tameness and aridity of the sandstone districts to which it belongs. You must not question my orthography for this cape. I admit that Wrath is more poetical; but our business in geography, is truth. Of the Rath itself, there are no remains.

Along the shore, the most remarkable feature is the detached pinnacle of Rochil, resembling that of the Ru Storr, and forming a very fine object. The sandstone cliffs are of a grander and more picturesque character than is usual in this rock; from the magnitude of the fracture, and the consequent breadth and boldness of the parts. But they are rendered more striking by the marks of destruction so peculiarly impressed on them; which, while they evince the violence of the wild sea that seems for ever to break along this dreary coast, are in har-

mony with the aspect of the now unterminated northern ocean, and with that impression which results from the reflection that no land now lies between us and the Pole. The neighbouring rocks of granite and gneiss, do not convey the same notion of violence and injury; apparently because the want of decision in their fractures does not equally betray the losses they have undergone; their apparent condition seeming to have been the original one. But in this sandstone, we feel that, in what remains, we can trace what has vanished; the apparent freshness and breadth of the fractured faces reminding us of their recent losses, as if whole cliffs had been carried off and buried in the deep. In a few places indeed, the enormous masses remain pitched on the ledges below where they had fallen; as if the ruin had but just taken place before our eyes.

The tide, which we had long been stemming to little purpose, now at length began to slacken, and we opened Cape Rath; a sight which none on board had seen, and which few have ever seen so near, as the strength and rapidity of the tides compel vessels to keep a wide offing. There is a moment in rounding a cape of this nature that is very impressive; when the new shore is not yet opened, and when we can truly feel that we are at the limit and verge of the land, with sea on all sides; contemplating the last promontory which, boldly advancing into the waters, braves the fury of a whole ocean. It was the north-western angle also of Scotland, the land's end of its wildest region, and the most advanced post of its wildest seas. The interminable horizon, wide spread around, reminded us that there was nothing before us now, for ever, but sea and sky.

Nor was the impression, that we were now, as it were, launched on the polar seas, diminished by the aspect of

this cape. As if nothing else could resist the fury of a northern ocean, Nature seemed to have reared a huge and rude barrier which neither storms nor waves should ever have power to move. I felt how insignificant Cape Rath would have appeared, how Nature herself would have erred, had Britain here terminated in any other manner, had any lower and tamer point of land been opposed to this raging sea. Here she was truly her own poet; nor could the most vivid imagination and the most correct taste, have conceived a more thoroughly harmonious adaptation of character; that of the wildest land to the wildest ocean, the strong-built and immoveable rocks to the furious waves; to the majestic breaking of the lofty billows, a still more majestic pyramid, towering far above their greatest efforts, and, as the termination of the rude mountain ranges of Scotland, a buttress worthy of all their grandeur and all their strength.

The change in the nature of the rock takes place for a short distance before arriving at this cape, and is singularly fortunate for its picturesque character. We can feel that the effect of the sandstone cliffs, fine as they are, would have been as nothing here, compared to the noble forms of granite and gneiss which lift their broken and spiry masses above the white foam that surges against them. Here also, and no where else, there is a single and insulated mass of these rocks; as if Nature had especially provided them that she might guard the land from the attacks of the ocean by a substance of unusual strength. While the cliffs are lofty, rugged, and broken into wild and angular forms, Cape Rath itself, the extreme point of the land, stands boldly out into the waves as if separated from them; a towering and noble pyramid, of three hundred feet or more in height. Nothing can exceed the elegance and majesty of its form, declining towards

the sea in a second and much lower pyramidal rock; the whole forming an outline as graceful as it is unexpected, and as grand as it is appropriate.

No vessels approach this shore, as the rapidity and turbulence of the tide are extreme; and as this is esteemed both a difficult and a dangerous point to double. The captain therefore thought fit to haul off and stand further out to sea; when, perceiving an aperture through the pyramid, by means of the spying glass, I proposed to the men to take the boat and stand in shore, to examine it more nearly. As we approached the cape, an arched passage appeared through each pyramid; the largest being in the highest rock, and appearing to be about seventy or eighty feet high. Nothing could now be more magnificent; the lofty cliffs on our right hand being broken into a thousand rude forms, and the cape itself, with its double pyramid, towering above them and projecting far out from the land, like a gigantic wall; a triumphal arch worthy of Neptune. The green sea was foaming all round the foot of the rocks; and, as we drew nearer, the low sullen roar increased, adding awfulness to a scene already terrific. We were soon sensible that we had been fast falling into the most rapid stream of the tide; and could now perceive that it was running with the velocity of a torrent, through both the passages and round the point. The men held their oars in the water, for they were now useless, and there was a dead silence. I saw that they were alarmed, and uncertain what to do; but it was plain, in less than a minute, that retreat was out of the question, and that if we attempted to weather the point, we might probably fail, and be lost upon it. I proposed to the boatswain to go through the arch; since a minute's hesitation would have carried us into the breakers, and left the history of Cape Rath un-

told. To propose a choice where there was none, was mere matter of policy; but it served its purpose. Not a word was answered; and as the helm in my hand was now useless, all the oars were kept in the water, to steady and steer by through the boiling current; when, almost before we had time to think what was to follow, we were whirled through, I know not how, and, in an instant, found ourselves lodged in an eddy in a deep fissure of the cliff; the first, assuredly, who had ever performed this feat.

Here, with the flood, there is some smooth water; out of which it is just possible to scramble up, on a ledge of rocks within, a deep fissure, and thus to study the scene at leisure. This situation too is very fine; the green waves surging with a hollow noise into this recess, which is only illumimated partially from without, and extends perpendicularly upwards the whole height of the cliffs, to an altitude of five or six hundred feet; just affording a glimpse of the sky. The aspect of the cape is here tremendously striking; as, from its proximity, it now towers over head, to an imaginary and unlimited height; while the turbulence and roar of the stream of tide through the arches, and the foaming of the sea against the cliffs, added indescribably to the effect. Nor was it a small addition, that this situation was attended with some anxiety, if not danger; as the rising of the wind, or the shifting of the tide from the flood to the ebb, might have rendered it impossible to get off again.

Proceeding to the eastward, the sandstone cliffs are renewed, but of even greater altitude and finer forms, broad, bold, and lofty; the whole coast indeed, from the cape to near the entrance of Diurness Bay, being exceeded in grandeur by few parts, even of Sky, and equalled by none on the west coast of the mainland. These

cliffs swarm with the sea eagle, and the noise which they made was like the barking of a cry of curs. Here also we saw some sheep which had descended in search of grass, to points whence they could never again return; and some of which, as the shepherds on shore afterwards informed us, had thus been suspended between life and death for three years. It is part of the trade of these eagles to attempt to throw them down into the sea; an operation in which they often succeed, as I once witnessed in Sky. Stack a Cloa, which stands here detached at a great distance from these cliffs, forms a magnificent object. Although of sandstone, and therefore displaying that mason-like structure which I formerly noticed, I know not that any other character or mode of disposition could have produced so fine an effect. Of all the similar pinnacles in Scotland, whether on the east or west coasts, there is not one to be compared to this for elegance of form, or singularity. As far as the eye could judge, it rises to the height of 200 feet or more, immediately from the sea; the basement on which it stands being extremely narrow, but rendering the effect far more pleasing than if these spires had shot up unsupportens from the water. There are two associated pinnacles, streant, of equal altitudes and similar forms; the general outline of each being gracefully pyramidal, while that of the whole is no less elegant. They remind us of the paired spires of the Gothic cathedral; and as if Nature had meant to preserve them from accident, they appear as if bound together at two points, by transverse blocks of stone; adding as much to their effect as to their appearance of strength and durability.

Diurness Bay is a shallow inlet of considerable extent, and is utterly uninteresting, as the land has now become low and lost all character. Farout Head, its eastern

boundary, is equally without beauty. I found here a flock of the shawl goat of Thibet, which had been imported from India, and were thriving. There can be no doubt that this animal would succeed in Scotland; but some fatality has attended the few trials hitherto made. Having taken considerable trouble on this subject, I was sorry to find that the present flock, shortly after my visit here, was sold to the French; who have shown a degree of activity in this matter, which ought to shame us who have the means of success so much more directly in our own hands.

This is a limestone country, and, like Derbyshire, it contains one of the caves so common in this class of rock, called Smow. Within the land, a river sinks into the ground, falling in a cascade into a deep hole, and under an arch of rock which forms a natural bridge across it. It is seen no more till we reach the sea shore, where it is found issuing like a spring within a lofty open dome. Within this cave, a dark opening like a door way, admits into an inner cavern, feebly illuminated by this aperture, and by the cascade at the further extremity, produced by the river which disappears from above; falling as if from some mysterious source, with an effect which is alike extraordinary and impressive.

The appearance of a vessel on the coast, found some other occupation for our cutter than that of examining caves. The guns were made ready for action, and the powder brought on deck; a ceremony, at all times, which might well have been dispensed with by him who was but a "lodger," and who might lose a leg, or receive a musket ball through his pia mater or diaphragm, without the possibility of gaining either honour or tobacco in compensation. But, as on other occasions, the alarm blew over, when we saw the cod lines over the

stern, and heard, in answer to our hail, "the Molly of and from Scarborough." This, however, brought us near to the celebrated Stack, a solitary rock in the ocean which I had purposed to visit. Like all other things, animate and inanimate, that have no rival, it appeared an important object; rising with its broad mass high out of this waste of waters. A cloud of gannets arose as the boat drew near; and on firing a shot, the whole seemed enveloped as if in a snow shower. It is one of the great breeding places of the north, and was then white with the resort of the birds. Did a shepherd not know all his sheep, and were we not sure that even the physiognomy of every goose, simple as are the elements of his countenance, is known to the gosherd, we might well have wondered how every mother gannet knew its own child, among the crowd of squealing and naked wretches that covered the rock so thickly as scarcely to leave room for a foot to step between them. It is not less wonderful that they have a distinct recognition of that very tender and abstract idea, property. Near many of these nests, were deposited fish; sacredly appropriated, as the bird-catchers affirm, to the captor and his uses, no gannet interfering with his neighbour's store. The only theory we could form to explain this, was that it arose from their having no lawyers. Among the crows, who are well known to hold courts of oyer and terminer, depredations are at least as frequent as conviction and punishment. It is a mere ὕστερον πρότερον to suppose that disputes produce laws. And having determined this knotty point, the helm was put down, and we stood for the Skerry. This is a long low rock, and was once frequented by the seal fishers; but three men, who had been left there on one occasion, having been drowned or starved while the boat was detained from them by bad weather, it has been

abandoned. We found it impossible to land, from the sea that was breaking on it, and, the evening drawing on, bore up for Loch Eribol in hopes of sleeping at anchor.

By dusk, we had made the entrance of this magnificent bay, and, as on many other occasions, the burden of this pilotage fell on unlucky me, since neither the captain nor any of the crew knew the anchorage. But my knowledge was land wit, not sea wit, as I only knew it from the shore, because it lay behind a remarkable promontory of quartz rock. Before we had well beat up to the middle of the loch, it grew dark; and as the pitchy blackness of the high mountains soon overshadowed my promontory and my knowledge together, I found myself, as I had often done before, in no very enviable position, that of the blind leading the blind; piloting two dozen of honest fellows to Davy Jones, for aught I knew. However, it was necessary to put a good face on my ignorance; and, what with keeping the lead going, and keeping an eye on the shadowy form of Ben Hope, and guessing and, protesting alternately, we at length weathered this formidable point, long after every person had vowed that no point could be there. It was far more delightful, you may well suppose, to me than to any one else, to hear the iron cable rumbling through the hawse hole, when now so dark that we could not discover whether we were within a yard or a mile of the shore. I vowed that I would never pilot a vessel again into harbour in the dark: but I had often vowed the same before. Behold, when day appeared, we were in the very anchorage itself: and "the Stone Doctor" gained credit, as others have done on other occasions, with as little merit as was well possible.

Loch Eribol is one of the finest and most spacious

bays and among the best anchorages in Scotland; nor is it deficient in grandeur of aspect; from the height of the surrounding land, rising, at the further extremity, into the elegant and lofty form of Ben Hope. A small island in the middle adds to its variety; and, at the upper end, it terminates in some wild alpine scenery, which leads, through a deep valley, into the interior country, and to Dun Dornadil. From Rispond, and along the western shore, there is nothing interesting: but, on the eastern, there is a series of caves and arches, the most extensive and extraordinary on any part of the Scottish coast. The Whiten Head itself, is a heavy mass; but the cave nearest to it is much the finest in this loch, although it appears to be unknown. It is indebted for its beauty, chiefly to its loftiness and the elegance of its dome, which reminds us of that of St. Paul's. Nothing can well be more exquisite than the shape, or more majestic than the general effect. The height of the external aperture is sufficient to produce that subdued illumination which is equally superior to a full light and to the gloom too common in these vast caverns; and the colouring, depending partly on the natural tint of the rocks, and partly on the green reflections from the water, is no less beautiful. With the cave of Staffa, it cannot of course be compared, from the dissimilarity of character; but, excepting that, it exceeds, in beauty, and in splendour and sublimity of effect, all the caves of Scotland; except perhaps that of Papa Stour in Shetland.

The very profound cavern next in order, called Fraisghill, is well known. Of this it is reported, that whoever enters to the further extremity, will return without his skin. What the nature and origin of this fable is, I do not know; unless it is some imperfect remain of the ancient fables and legends which considered caves as the

habitations of demons and dragons; and the exploring of which, formed one of the great exploits, not only of the heroes of ancient Germany and Scandinavia, but of the Oriental adventurers whose history is so familiar to us. However that may be, among the people of this country, as well as with us travellers and cockneys, there is always something mysterious and marvellous attached to the notion of a cave. Like cascades, they have some hidden charms which render them among the first objects of attraction; and whether good or bad, hideous or beautiful, it is quite sufficient if they are black and dirty; while the most contemptible will bear the palm against all picturesque scenery of every class. To be wrapt in admiration at Peak's Hole, the very St. Peter's of all caverns, or at the cave of Staffa, is indeed more than justifiable; but there is not a dog-hole any where throughout the country, provided it be called a cave, which has not its guide and its fable and its farthing candles. Of every Highland one, it is said that it is endless, and that the piper who entered never returned; the sound of his pipes vanishing by degrees till it was lost; while, of some, it is even pretended to point out the distant course. Near Dunkeld, there is one which is said to reach to Schihallien. It is a similar feeling which multiplies the subterranean labyrinths of the Otrantos, and the Udolphos, and of the rest of this fertile race; dark passages which lead to nothing; unless to the reader's, as to the hero's or heroine's, inextricable confusion.

We did not, however, lose our skins; but a few dozens of unlucky cormorants, I grieve to say, lost theirs, and were made into soup. In the forms of this cave there is nothing very striking; but from its extreme depth and irregularity, the effects of light are far more numerous and remarkable than in any similar spot that I know. On

entering, we proceed at length into what appears utter darkness; and it is difficult to get rid of the feeling that we are about to fall down into some abyss; though the least consideration is sufficient to shew that this is impossible in a boat. Of what remain, the variety is endless; in columns, arches, caves, and recesses; sometimes simple, at others more complicated; while they possess that regularity, arising from the peculiar fracture of the rock, which is always productive of elegant and definite forms. The recollection of the Norwegians is still preserved here; a stone being shown where it is said that Haco landed, during his celebrated expedition to the Western Islands.

Did I not tell you that a day was coming when you should not have to complain that I wearied you with the beauties of the Highlands. They are past and gone, to return no more. You must now seek for some other subject of remonstrance, that I may amend that too: as it is so easy to satisfy "tout le monde et son père." The fate of the Greek painter's picture is well known; but had he possessed more wit, he would have given his figure a crooked leg or a wen, and thus saved the remainder; as Alcibiades cut off his dog's tail to divert the people from his follies, or as we lay sugar for wasps to preserve our peaches, or as I did, when I made Ravaillac a Jesuit instead of a Feuillant, ten pages ago; with equally good an effect I doubt not. Similar matters will come to light hereafter, of themselves. But he is an inhuman wretch who would attempt to produce a work without faults, since there is no pleasure equal to that of noting them: it is to rob the world of the better part of its delights. Franklin tells a story of a certain two-legged barometer: I wish he had told us how many persons looked first at the straight leg. But the wind is fair for Orkney, the anchor is a-trip, the fore sheet draws, and Hoy Head looms misty in the eastern horizon.

LOCH HOPE, TONGUE, BAGPIPE, HARP, MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS OF THE HIGHLANDERS.

"Two months are gone and over, and nine long tedious days," once more the iron cable rumbles through the hawse hole, murdering the innocent sleep, and once more Loch Eribol expands its noble waste of watery plain. I trust you will approve, at least of my travels in Orkney and Hialtland. You must have perceived the striking distinctions in the character of the people; and you must also have seen what valuable illustrations these countries afford of the Norwegian history of Scotland; how they explain, in the mode of their tenures and their cultivation, the former condition of the Highlands, to us past away, and what valuable conclusions as to the improvement of this country, may be drawn from them. If these islands are not noted for picturesque beauty, you will still have seen that they present many scenes both grand and striking; while you will also have discovered how well they explain many of the antiquities which have passed in review. I trust also that you have found the "personal narrative," as Mr. Baron Von Humboldt calls it, equally pithy, new, and surprising; and, in brief, that you have risen from the perusal, equally edified and entertained. One thing I am at least quite sure of; that you have not been able to discover a single fault in the whole of that volume; and now therefore, secure of your approbation, we will, if you please, proceed hand in hand to

discuss, in our usual amicable manner, the remainder of Sutherland.

If the beauty of the western Highlands can only be enjoyed by navigating them, Loch Eribol is, however, the limit beyond which it is unnecessary to proceed, even one mile, in the same manner. Hence to Dunnet Head at least, there is scarcely a point that offers any attraction: and, with few exceptions, the same is true as far as Cromarty. The interior is almost a blank; and he who has seen Duncansby Head and the Ord, may be satisfied.

The botanist will be delighted to see the turf about Eribol thickly covered with the elegant white flowers of Dryas octopetala, as it is by daisies elsewhere. Though Loch Hope is a fine piece of water, the want of wood deprives it of all claims to picturesque beauty. Hence to Tongue, over a boggy tract called the Crask, the only objects to notice, are two remains of Pictish towers, ruined to the very foundation.

The Bay of Tongue is so shallow as to afford no anchorage, and is everywhere obstructed by bars and shoals, which, at low water, are covered by seals, crowded on the sands like flocks of sheep. A rocky hill, bearing the ancient and ruined Castle Varrich, gives an air of dignity to the scene; but it is a mere tower without interest. The long spit whence this place derives its name, is interesting; as it is evidently a production of the sea; indicating that the whole loch within it, will, at some distant day, become dry land. While the house of Tongue, surrounded by ancient trees, forms a pleasing object, the extensive and long hollow valley in which the water lies, presents a noble sweep; Ben Laighal, with its rocky and manifold summit, forming a magnificent boundary to the whole. Could we transfer to the Loch of Tongue, the wood which decorates the lakes of Perth

shire, it would not be exceeded in beauty by many spots in the Highlands. This place has now become accessible by a new road, but the whole line is uninteresting. Loch Laighal is a huge pool in a bare moor. Loch Naver is not one whit better. The only interest which the whole line ever afforded, was the chance of being suffocated in passing that huge and hideous bog, Crock Stank; and the road has destroyed that source of excitement. It is rather, also, a moorland than a mountainous country; an open, rude, undulating land of rocks and bogs, with the four distinct mountains Ben Ay, Ben Hope, Ben Laighal, and Ben Klibrigg, dispersed independently, and far asunder, over it.

We had just dined, in this very country, in a mansion which, pursuant to my rule, I must not specify, and were listening to the melodies which a certain John Macdonald was storming from his pipes, when there strutted in, the Official of the clan; his cheeks distended and glowing from a walk of seventy miles over this trackless country, which, like a thorough Highlander, he had adventured, for no apparent reason but that he had nothing else to do.

If Donald Abroch drew his descent from the aboriginal and hereditary pipers of our clan, to which, I believe, he had a dormant claim, not absolutely decided by the Heralds of this tempestuous College, John Macdonald had blown before the Emperor of China, the great Kien Long, brother to the Sun and Moon. He had accompanied Lord Macartney's embassy. Both had gained prizes, and, as pipers, were natural rivals; like wits, "game cocks to one another." The drone of Donald's pipe streamed with "bonny flags" of red and blue, while "he made his cheeks as red as crimson, and bobbed when he blew the bags." Meantime the banner of defiance hoisted on his antagonist's spirit-stirring engine, floated

on the troubled air in the radiant yellow of the Celestial Empire. As etiquette demanded that each should be heard in turn, the Imperial piper, having the precedence, as of divine right, put forth all his energy on the advent of his rival; as the cock crows a louder defiance should some neighbour chanticleer intrude on his hereditary domain. But poor John was now seventy; nor had his wind much improved by the quantity of monsoon which he had swallowed in the Indian seas. His breeze being blown, Donald, who knew the weak point in his rival's lungs, now raised a blast so loud and dread, that it reminded me of the roaring of the lion of the Rabbi Jehosuah Ben Hananiah, at the sound of whose voice all the women aborted and the people's teeth dropped out of their heads. John turned yellow with despair, as the Imperial ribbons; and thus ended act the first.

It was not for us to decide between rival pibrachs or rival pipers; but by the aid of some judicious applause and more acceptable whisky, a sort of amicable armistice was produced till the next act should begin. It was now necessary that they should play together, a duet, composed of different pibrachs in different keys, in which it was the business of each to out-scream his neighbour, by the united force of lungs and elbows. The north side of the room was in possession of the Emperor's piper, and he of our clan drew up his force on the south; each strutting and blowing till, like rival bullfinches, they were ready to burst both lungs and bag, each playing his own tune in harmonious dissonance, and both, as they crossed each other at every turn, looking the defiance they would have breathed had not their wind been otherwise employed. The chanters screamed, the drones grunted; and as the battle raged with increasing fury, Donald's wind seemed ready to burst its cearments; while the

steam of the whisky, distilling through the bag, dropped, as from the nozzle of a worm pipe. Poor John was now nearly blown; but as we were unwilling that he should puff out, for our amusement, the last of that breath which he had with so much difficulty brought all the way from Pekin, we determined that enough had been done for honour, and put an end to the concert, according to the rules of bucolic-contest, by allotting equal praises and equal prizes to each swain. That they had both played "fort bien" could not be doubted: still less, according to the French pun, that they had played "bien fort." Assuredly, this music must resemble that of the spheres; which is so loud, says Censorinus, that it deafens us; and that is the reason, says Butler, that "we hear it not."

It is not wonderful if the responsive vibrations of a piper's tympanum are not very accurate, nor the musical organ of his brain peculiarly sensitive to sweet sounds, after the daily induration which they must have undergone from such outrageous and unceasing inroads on their sensibility. The auricular nerve is probably hardened as effectually as if it had been immersed for as many years in a tan-pit. So much the better for them: but it is not easy to describe the subsidence of feeling, the general deliquium, as physicians have it, which such worthless auditors as we are, experience, when an act of this music closes. It cannot be much unlike what the Mickmack or Dog-ribbed Indian feels when his teeth have all been drawn, and the fire is burnt out to allow him a little repose to prepare for a new act of the tragedy. But no one can ever forget, if he has had the fortune to hear it, the Highland competition on the Edinburgh stage; nor the produce of thirty of these musicians with colours flying, puffing, strutting, and swelling through the High Street: that indeed is a harmony not soon to be effaced from the tablets of the memory.

I am not going to indulge you just now with a learned dissertation in B flat; and therefore you need not yet stop your own ears. But I am bound in honour to say that Donald Abroch and John Macdonald ought to have squealed and puffed their hour away on the green before our door: this is scarcely endurable chamber music, even to Highland ears; unless indeed they be piper's ears. There are times, and places, and feelings, and circumstances, and associations, in every thing, as much as in the matter of bagpipes; and I know not many of our pleasures that will admit of being stripped stark naked, or transplanted out of their appropriate company or order. In music, these associations are perhaps more strong than in any thing which belongs to ordinary life. Who has not felt them as well as Dorset, "the muse's pride." "Then think how often love we've made To you when all these tunes were played." It is not very true, indeed, that a nightingale by daylight would be "but a common fowl;" (poetry and truth being two things;) but Mr. Canning would make as little impression on a Negro palaver or a council of copper-coloured Sachems, as Catalani would on a criminal with the rope round his neck; nor would you expire of raptures if, when broiling and starving in the sands of Jupiter Ammon, you should suddenly fall in with Vestris and Parisot dancing a pas de deux. If a piobrach from Dhonuil Dhubh would not rouse much applause at the Philharmonic concert, neither would Viotti's fiddlestick have led a very vigorous charge at the battle of the Hara Law.

As far as the abstract affair of music is concerned, I think that of the bagpipe fully as abominable as is necessary. But that is a separate question; nor have I travelled so much in this country without having learned to take much delight in its noises: time, place, scenery, occupation, dreams of the olden time, and all other

circumstances fitting. The very sight of the important personage,—the eye of pride and the cheek of energy, the strut of defiance and the streaming of the pennons over the shoulder, where the bold pipes lie like a little battery of culverins breathing war at every noisy muzzle, form in themselves an inspiriting sight. Half the fashionable claims of the harp stand on no better ground: the most worthless twanging of unintelligible arpeggio is consecrated by the classical form, by the splendour of brass and gold, and by the exquisite attitude of the fair who, pressing the pedal with the taper foot, bends over it in all the well-drilled attitudes of a dancing master's Cecilia.

The jovial reel on the well-trod green would lose half its interest before any other tones than that of the pipe: and often have we all hailed with pleasure the long straggling column returning from the southern harvests, with the piper marching at their head. At sea, as you well know, it has often added zest to the evening glass, when the sails hung idle from the yards, and the water, like a bright mirror, was glancing in the last beams of the setting sun: and, when returning at night from some distant expedition, often have the welcome sounds directed the boat to the dark anchorage, where the vessel lay invisible beneath the overhanging shadows of the mountain bay. I shall not soon forget the last beautiful evening that I spent in Lochaber; and such scenes, I doubt not, have come across your path also. The slanting rays of the yellow sun were gleaming on the huge mass of Ben Nevis, the wide and wild landscape around had become grey, and every sound seemed to be sunk in the repose of night. Shortly was heard, but faint yet and distant, the melancholy wailing of the lament that accompanied a funeral, as its slow procession

was seen marching down the hill; the bright tartans just visible on its brown declivity. As it advanced, the sounds seemed to swell on the breeze till it reached the retired and lonely spot where a few grey stones, dispersed among the brown heath, marked the last habitations of those who had gone before. The pause was solemn that bespoke the farewell to the departed; and as the mourners returned, filing along the narrow passes of Glen Nevis, the retiring tones died away, wild, indefinite, yet melodious as the Œolian harp, as they alternately swelled and sank on the evening breeze, till night closed around and all was hushed.

We must not be always philosophizing in the spirit of Adam Smith or Blackstone; nor is it in the wilds of Knoydart and Morrer, or among the stormy waves of Sky or Jura, that we must permit ourselves to be engaged in speculations on modern music and Italian refinement. The bare heath with its single grey stone marking the bed of the valiant, the solitary cairn, the dark pass, the silent glen, the roaring torrent, and the mountain shrouded in clouds and mists, will interfere, in spite of all our reasonings; and he is little to be envied who has so far divested himself of all historic associations, of all the spirit of poetry and romance, as to look at all these things with the quiet judgment of a moralist or a modern politician, to listen to the Highland bagpipe and to ask himself if this be harmony. Long may the blast of the piper blow, as he struts in all the inflation of wind and pride before his chief; and thanks to the feelings which, though they can appreciate the music of Italy, will still listen with delight or enthusiasm to the discordant sounds that speak of the cheerful meetings of the times that are gone, or of the heroic deeds of former days.

I hope I have done some justice to the bagpipe: there is no want of affection, at least: but it is necessary to distinguish between music as an art, and the music of a strathspey or a pibrach. It is only the very vulgar in reasoning, to whom a mere term forms the whole body of science or art. Poetry, architecture, are equally wide words. We may admire a rustic ballad from the pen of Burns or a delicate trifle from that of Moore, without comparing them with their better selves, or with a thousand other mighty masters of the human passions. We can turn from Swift to Milton, pleased in different ways with both; yet without confounding things which have nothing in common but the name of poetry. York cathedral, the Parthenon, what is there in common between these but stone and lime; yet we can admire, and wonder at each, while, even from those, we can turn with pleasure to an ivied cottage or a comfortable building of "good brown brick." I can listen to the bagpipe just as I can regale on oat cakes and whisky; although the harmonies of the one are not found in the Requiem of Mozart, nor the composition of the others in the treatises of Dr. Kitchener or Mrs. Rundell. Highland music is one thing, and music is another: and just such resemblance is there between porridge and a purée of woodcocks.

The bagpipe, musically speaking, is as vile a contrivance as it is easy to imagine: harsh, imperfect, and untuneable. I speak of the great Highland pipe; because the same instrument, under various modifications, is often pleasing, and sufficiently perfect within its range. That which is used in Italy is agreeable, though limited in power. In our own country, the Irish and the Northumberland pipes are exceedingly respectable instruments; adding sweetness of tone to sufficient truth of intonation within the range of their keys. While the former

resembles the hautboy in quality, the latter approaches nearer to the clarinet. These, from the smallness of their reeds and the narrow diameters of their pipes, require but a moderate quantity of wind, and can therefore be blown by a bellows; as may a sort of bastard Highland pipe, of small dimensions, which is sometimes used by itinerant musicians in the Lowlands and has probably been derived from Ireland or England. The chaunter, or perforated pipe in the Highland instrument, has a clarinet reed of great breadth; whence that loudness of sound for which it is esteemed. In a military instrument, that is a valuable quality: nor is the tone harsh, however loud. It is, on the contrary, a fine clarinet tone, when heard at a sufficient distance, and abstracted from its faults of scale, or from those which are caused by hearing imperfect or wrong intervals in harmony or in near succession. The scale, as is well known, consists of the complete octave with an additional note; but some of the intervals are very incorrect, and the upper notes are all out of tune, being extremely flat. One of its leading defects, which is the chief cause of this, is that which belongs, more or less, to the whole race: the impossibility of shortening the reed by biting it. If the immense quantity of wind required to supply all the wide pipes of the Highland instrument, render it a severe exertion, there is an advantage in one respect, that this is an equable one. The elbow performs the office which would otherwise fall on the muscles of the chest; and what that is, is well known to players on the hautboy. Even in the common flageolet flute, as Vaucanson's trials proved, the variation of force required for the lowest and the highest notes, ranges from an ounce to fifty-six pounds. From this the piper is relieved by the intervention of his bag. But, not to dwell on these details, it is

from these and other imperfections on which I need not enlarge, that the bagpipe is so offensive to a good ear; particularly in playing all those compositions which wander beyond its legitimate range, so as to include those notes in it which are faulty, or to cause the performer to substitute minor for major intervals, or the reverse.

The bagpipe is considered the national instrument of the Highlands.—This modification of it is certainly peculiar to that country: but the instrument itself, under a variety of forms, has been known from almost all antiquity, and has been found all over the world. That it was used among the Greeks and Romans, we are assured from ancient monuments; and it has therefore idly been imagined that the Caledonians borrowed it from the latter. But the Highlanders, at least, had little or no communication with the Romans; and it would be more reasonable to trace it immediately, either to Ireland, or to the common Celtic source of both people, or, possibly, to the invading Northmen, among whom it is also known to have existed. As to its Irish origin, I must, however, remark, that it is not mentioned by Giraldus Cambrensis as an Irish instrument, though he names it as in use in Scotland and Wales. It is found to this day, even in Lapland; but it must be supposed that this anomalous people derived it from their Hunnish or Sclavonian ancestors. It is probable that the Highland bagpipe is originally derived from the east, the source of all knowledge, and the apparent source of the Celts themselves; since instruments of similar construction are known in China and India. But there are no hopes of illustrating so obscure a subject, nor of determining, either the period at which it was introduced, or the origin of its present form. It must be observed, however, that it is not noticed in any of the ancient Gaelic poems. That is

a remarkable circumstance, and may be used as an argument for the antiquity of these compositions, if Highlanders please; but they must then admit the pipe to be a modern instrument: they cannot be allowed antiquity for both. Critics of another class will question whether this fact does not assist in proving the Irish claims to these poems; since, in that country, the harp has been, from all record and tradition, the national and the poetical instrument. That the poems of Ossian, or any other poetry, was sung to a bagpipe accompaniment, is not a very probable circumstance; but this is a question connected with the former use of the harp in the Highlands, on which, like my neighbours, I shall attempt to throw some additional darkness hereafter.

It is chiefly from the false intonation of the bagpipe, particularly in the upper notes, that arises the harshness against which every ear, untutored in this music, exclaims. The tones of the chaunter, or the real pipe, it is true, are very far from being sweet, but they are clear and pure. Those of the drones are sonorous and fine; nor would there be any thing to complain of, if the system of the instrument were amended. The very principle of a drone consists in the key note, or of that note with an octave or a fifth, or with both. But in this contrivance, the same drone must represent both the minor and the major scale; producing a species of harmony which only Highland ears can endure. Yet it is quite unnecessary that the bagpipe should be out of tune. It can derive no merit from imperfection. Nor can there be any difficulty whatever in remedying these defects. It would be quite easy to render the intonation more perfect, as well as to extend the range, by means of a better system of boring, and by additional keys, as is done in the Northumberland pipe. The same expedient of keys

might be adopted for changing the key of the drones, and without any great incumbrance to the player: and thus the instrument would not only gain in truth and harmony, but in the power of adding to its very limited scale of airs, and to the confined number of its keys. Nor would it sacrifice any thing of the beauty of its appearance, or of its loudness and brilliancy; qualities which certainly are most essential, and which ought to be preserved. It might thus, it is true, appear to lose somewhat in power and strength of tone; but the real loss would only be in noise; as the discordance, in this, as in all other cases in music, gives only the appearance of power, not the reality. He who wishes the audience to hear the beauty of his voice in a chorus, may easily effect his purpose by singing out of tune, and thus acquire such fame as he merits, and such as the bagpipe derives from the same cause.

It is naturally asked why this improvement has not been made. The irrelative keys and transitions might remain as before; as indeed they ought: but the minor mode would be as minor as ever, though its scale were rendered complete; the character of a major melody would not be destroyed by having a major instead of a minor third; nor would any particularly bad effects follow from a sharp seventh, as a true octave, or from playing a major air in its own key, instead of forcing one half of it into the minor one, to the utter confusion of the melody and composition. Of Highland expedients, these are surely among the worst. But such cavillers forget that the instrument is already perfect; and not only that it is a perfect instrument, but a Highland instrument. To render it more perfect, would, of course, be impossible; but to alter it, even in the minutest particular, would be considered no less a crime than it was, in Timotheus, to

have added a string to the Greek lyre. Such are the effects of pride or of obstinacy, or of bad ears, or of an over-refined respect for antiquity; for our friends may make their election in this matter. We must indeed recollect that Highland ears are not bound to conform to ours; and when we doubt of their accuracy, we are perhaps only displaying the length of our own. Certainly, whoever is in the right, our ears are not bored to the same scale as Donald's. It is very certain that a Highlander esteems his pibrach or his reel to be the perfection of melody, as he considers his unvarying drone the quintessence of harmony. Hence he goes on, "without remorse or mitigation" of wind, executing at the very top of his abominable scale, melodies which belong to the violin; not only utterly insensible to the dissonance and false intonation, but substituting, without scruple, minor for major tones, or the contrary, or one note for another. He even delights in the effect; often also feeling no small indignation at his ignorant and tasteless audience; nor does he for a moment imagine that his drone in G is not also the fundamental note of a melody in A.

But I believe we must excuse him; for, in truth, the human ear appears to be a very accomodating machine. A piano forte, in this part of the world, is never tuned from the time it is created; but its defects are not discovered, and it is played on without compunction. If we often listen with wonder, we must recollect that it is a mark of ignorance to wonder at any thing. Our own fair dilettantes on that universal instrument, are not a little tolerating on the subject of intonation, although I will not exactly say that it is impossible for a piano forte player to possess a good ear. But though we must not allow the Highland piper to set up his ears in competition with our own as long as there is such a point of re-

ference as the mathematical division of a string, there is somewhat more of habit and education in this affair than musicians have been always willing to admit. There was once no harmony acknowledged but in the unison; it is so still among savage nations. From this to the octave is a very short step. It is not very long since to "quintoyer" was a synonymous term with harmony: Chaucer's musician accompanies himself with a "loud quinible;" though the meaning, even of that, has been disputed by those who dispute every thing: now, a musician would faint at a regular succession of fifths. Gregorian chants gave way to the immediate predecessors of Corelli and the musicians of that period; the Paesiellos and the Cimarosas succeeded. Laws, inviolable laws, for the regulation of harmony, have been in succession made and violated. The rules for the preparation and resolution of chords are only now obeyed when it is not found preferable to disobey them. A Haydn trembles at his own boldness; his hands recoil even at the sounds himself has made; but still he goes on: more fearless, steps in a Mozart; and at length, a Beethoven plunges into a congregation of sounds that might raise from the very grave, the spirits of his early predecessors. The audience keeps pace, but it is a lagging one, with these innovations; first wondering what they mean, and lastly wondering at their former insensibility. Such is the progress of human ears; and of human improvement too, in many other matters.

The proper music of the bagpipe is well worthy of the instrument. But, in fact, they are really fit for each toher, and ought never to have been separated. The instrument has suffered in reputation, like the ass in the fable, by aiming at too high flights. It is, properly speaking, a military weapon, and the pibrach is its real busi-

ness. If all pibrachs are not marches, you may at least march as well to the one as the other, to Hara law as to Glas vear, to the Lament as to the Gathering of the clan. It is impossible, in truth, to march to either otherwise than as men may walk in spite of any noise. The pibrach has neither time, rhythm, melody, cadence, nor accent; neither key note, nor commencement, nor termination; and it can therefore regulate nothing. It begins, goes on, and ends, no one knows when, or how, or where; and if all the merit of the bagpipe is to depend on its martial, or rather its marching, utility, it could not certainly stand on a worse foundation. The subject of the pibrach, such as it is, consists of a few simple notes, or of a ground; often, scarcely containing a determined or intelligible melody. On this, are engrafted a train of variations, gradually increasing in velocity and violence, and supposed to describe the augmenting fury of the fight; generally succeeded by a slow movement, which is meant to represent lamentation: that of the vanquished for themselves, it must be supposed, and that of the victors for their friends. Thus the pibrach is the prototype of all the battles of Prague and their generation with which our ears have been annoyed from the time of Kotzwara, till Beethoven demolished at once all these petty Salmoneuses with his own thunder.

The variations are considerably more abominable than the ground; musically speaking, as we are now; but they are the best test of the artist's merit, as all that merit lies in difficult and rapid execution. Any man can blow the charge; but when it comes to action, it is he who has the strongest fingers and the worst taste that will carry the day. Yet there are rules too for all this cutting of notes, as it is called. The term is not ill chosen; as the ground is literally cut into tatters by a reiteration

of the most clumsy, common-place, and tasteless flourishes, offensive in themselves, but still more so by their excess; since every note is so encumbered, that whatever air might have existed, is totally swallowed up in the general confusion.

Though the pibrach is thus the proper music of the Highland pipe, and though the pipe is properly a military instrument, the funereal lament, or coronach, now nearly out of use, must also be included. Strictly speaking, indeed, this is in itself a military air; since the lament belongs properly to the warrior: if it is not always the dirge after the battle, it is the dirge, at least, over the soldier's grave. It is with far less propriety that this instrument is used to give life to the dance; and as a vocal accompaniment, it is plainly inapplicable, unless it were to accompany a concert of tygers and cats o' mountain. Nevertheless it is used for reels; and with bad enough success, if the ears are to be consulted: as a moving force, however, it answers its purpose very effectually. In fact, there are very few dancing airs that lie within its compass; since the greater number of these have been composed on the violin: such as it can play correctly, it does however play very characteristically. Yet, even as a dancing instrument, it is defective; as no mode of cutting, or fingering, can give that spirit which is communicated by a genuine Highland fiddlestick. Six inches of Niel Gow's horse-hair would have beaten all the bagpipes that ever were blown. The reel and strathspey are wretchedly tame on the pipe, though noisy enough: but fortunately, willing heels serve to cover or repair all its defects. Be it remembered, however, that it is infra dignitatem for a true Highland piper to play such music.

Thus much for the national instrument, as it is called. I have criticised it, musically, or, as speaking by the

gamut; but, without changing my ground, I can praise it too, as I have done already. It has a grand and noble sound, a sound that fills the valley and is re-echoed from the mountain: by association, that sound is a martial one. It is a handsome instrument also, with all its pennons flying; and the piper, when he is well inflated, is a noble-looking disdainful fellow. But if brought on the Edinburgh stage, it is to be admired and reverenced, not loved; it cannot with impunity be stript of all its associations: "cum mihi ostendas sic, odi." It is to hear it echoing among the blue hills of our early days, to sit on a bank of yellow broom and watch its tones as they swell, mellowed by distance, on the evening breeze, to listen to it as it is wafted wide over the silent lake, or breaking through the roaring of the mountain stream; this it is to hear the bagpipe as it ought to be heard; to love it as it ought to be loved. It is wide and wild nature, the deep glen and the mountain, that are its only concert-room; it is the torrent and the sound of the breeze that are its only accompaniments.

But the Harp has also been claimed for the Highlands, as a national instrument. As it has, however, long fallen into disuse, if ever indeed it was much known, this question has afforded an admirable arena for antiquaries. Prejudice, united to darkness, forms an exquisite basis of interminable discussion. As a meer looker on, I cannot pretend to much interest in the decision; therefore you need not be alarmed at the prospect of a profound research into probabilities; into things that might have been and that should have been. But when matters which ought to have been of common notoriety, require the kind of proof that has been adduced in this case, conviction does not easily follow. The instrument, or some instrument of this nature, has doubtless existed: the only question is,

whether it was common. Had it been so, it would surely not have been difficult to find numerous specimens of it, and indisputable traces of its existence. But let us look at the proofs.

If authority could avail as evidence, Gunn's name would prove a great deal: but his wishes and opinions are of little moment. The evidence on this subject which has been drawn from the poems of Ossian, is of equal value with the very luminous and satisfactory historical illustrations which Macpherson has derived from the same source. The Irish, indeed, can solve the question without difficulty; and the harps of the Ossians, be they who they may, are not the weakest evidence on which they found their claims to these poems. It is much more to the purpose that there is a field in Mull still called the harper's field, that there is a window in Duntulm Castle called the harper's window, and that many other memorials of the same nature exist. Donald, Lord of the Isles, was killed by his own harper Mac Cairbre, at Inverness, after the memorable misfortunes which followed his incursion into Atholl. Facts like these will serve to prove that such an instrument was known and used by the Maclean and the Macdonald. Perhaps however they will not still, in every instance, prove the existence of harps and harpers; as the evidence derived from terms is not often of much avail, unless their meaning were precisely known. That a Clear, or a Clearsach, was a harp with strings of wire, need not be doubted; but it is equally certain that the bard and the musician, or harper, (omitting the piper) were known by the same generic term; their very offices being indeed combined in the same person. Thus the field and the window do not necessarily prove, even the existence of a harper or a harp: it may be allowed that they prove that of a bard.

A similar objection, on the score of names, applies to arguments derived from the ancient use of the words Tiompan and Cruit. No man has pretended to say what the Tiompan was; for aught we know, it is as likely to have been a drum as a harp. The Irish, indeed, say that it was a Tympanum, a tambourine or tabor; notwith standing the well-known and most ungallant proverb which Hector Mac Neill has consecrated. That the Cruit was the Crwth, or crowd, an instrument known to the Welsh and the Irish, and also to the Normans of France, is rendered almost certain by similarity of name. Giraldus Cambrensis, who visited Ireland in 1185 and wrote largely on that country, has been quoted as authority for the use of the harp in the Highlands, and his testimony is certainly indisputable as far as it goes. He first asserts, what perhaps the Highlanders will not easily admit, that the Scots were indebted to the Irish for their knowledge of music; but that they had striven so hard to rival them, that they were now considered the better musicians of the two. Admitting therefore that his evidence relates to the harp, though the whole passage is rather loose, still, it would prove little more than that fact which no one is inclined to deny; namely, that this instrument was known to the Scots who were most intimately connected with Ireland by position. The inhabitants of the west coast, and the Irish, were in constant communication, and were, in fact, the same people; but we are equally certain that this communication was limited, and that, between the great internal tract of the Highlands and Ireland, there was no community. Cicero, very uncivilly, has told us that those who will talk of music or mathematics, without understanding those sciences, must talk nonsense. Such loose testimonials therefore as those of this often careless narrator, may

serve the vague purposes of general history; they answer very well for popular currrency and ordinary conversation; but this will not satisfy musicians and ought not to satisfy antiquaries.

But the existence of the Harp, its mere existence in the Highlands, at some period or other, is not denied by any one: and all these proofs amount, at the best, to nothing more. Yet Buchanan's testimony, which has been quoted as authority on this question, is here, as on all other subjects connected with the Highlands, of no value; as he has not spoken from personal knowledge. His name has too often been made of weight on matters in which he deserves to rank with the most credulous and inaccurate of his predecessors. The remark in John Major's Annals, proves, however, that a harp with strings of brass was known in Scotland. A writer also concering "certain matters in Scotland," "in 1597," mentions harps strung with sinews, and speaks also of the clearsach as strung with wire; the latter instrument being probably the same as the Irish harp. I may quote the passage from Monipennie, though it has often been quoted already. "They delight much in musick, but chiefly in harpes and clairschoes of their own fashion. The strings of the clairschoes are made of brasse wyre, and the strings of the harpes of sinews, which strings they strike, eyther with their nayles growing long, or else with an instrument appointed for that use." This however is but a hearsay author; nor is he an accurate one. He represents as general or common, that which was rare or casual; as when he also says that the armour with which the Highlanders cover their "bodyes in time of warre, is an yron bonnet and an habbergion" "almost even to their heeles." There is no such tradition, nor are there any remains of such armour as used by the people. A few chiefs might

have been so armed. I may however add to his testimony, that Bromton, an Irish chronicler (I believe), mentions the harp, in the time of Henry the second, as known to the Scots. There was a harp in the possession of the late General Robertson of Lude, which I have examined, and it is proved to have been brought from Argyllshire in 1460. It is said to resemble that one preserved in Ireland, well known to musical antiquaries, and supposed to have belonged to Brian Boromhe. This is engraved, I think in Walker and in Gunn both. It is possible, nay not unlikely, that the instrument at Lude may have been an Irish harp; a circumstance the more probable from the intimate connexion that subsisted between Ireland and the west coast of Scotland. But whether Irish or not, it no more proves the harp to have been in common use, than the presence of an organ would prove that this instrument also was of Scottish birth, or was commonly known. Admitting the harp at Lude to be Scottish, it is the only specimen in existence; and the date of 1460 might therefore be supposed the period of the extinction of the harp in Scotland, since it is the latest as well as the most ancient specimen.

That, however, is not the case. Macleod entertained a regular harper at Dunvegan in the seventeenth century; the celebrated poet and composer Roderick Morison, better known by the name of Rory Dall. The Macleans of Coll appear also to have maintained a harper as part of their establishment; and the death of the last did not take place till some time after 1734. Thus the use of the harp is brought down to a very late date; but this very evidence serves rather to prove its rarity than the contrary. If Maclean's harper had not been an exception, it is impossible but that, at so recent a period, the use of the harp must have been matter of common notoriety.

Harps would still have been found in the houses of chiefs; nor is it to be conceived that the Highlanders would have abandoned the instrument, or that it could have fallen into such utter disuse, at the very moment when oppression and conquest had rendered them more than ever tenacious of all that they were allowed to keep.

It is well known that, in Ireland, the harp was formerly in general use among itinerant and professional minstrels, as it has continued in some degree to the present day; but there is not the slightest trace or record of the former existence of itinerant or independent native harpers in the Highlands. It appears to have been merely an object or an instrument of state among the greater chieftains; probably, in all cases, part of the business of the bard, as in the instance of Rory Dall; and doubtless borrowed, as Giraldus says, from Ireland. It is well remembered yet in Argyllshire, that Irish itinerant harpers used to wander about the country sixty or seventy years ago; and, what is most interesting to remark, that they are said to have composed "Scotch tunes."

Whether the bagpipe was a Celtic or a Gothic instrument, from which tribe of their progenitors the Highlanders and the Irish borrowed it, will never be determined. But it seems tolerably clear that the harp was derived from their second race of ancestors, from the Teutonic tribes. We have better and more ancient authority for its being a Saxon instrument than its use by Alfred. The name itself is Saxon, and the Oirpeam of the Irish is, plainly, the Hearpa. Clairschoe, the musical board, is a new compounded term. The figure of the instrument has been found in ancient Gothic sculptures, coinciding precisely with that of the Irish harp; and a similarly formed one has been found in use among some of the Gothic tribes of the present Tartars. From the

same source we may equally derive it for the Welsh; nor is it necessary that they should have borrowed it from Ireland. Though they should have possessed it before the time of the Saxon invasions, they might have been indebted for it to their Cimbric ancestors; taking it for granted that the Cimbri were a Gothic people, and not a Celtic one, as Pinkerton seems erroneously to have concluded.

But, to conclude these desultory remarks, you must remember that the only question here at issue is, whether the harp was common, whether it was a national instrument, not whether it existed. Even Gunn admits that there are no traces of former professional or itinerant harpers in the Highlands, resembling those of Ireland and Wales. If this instrument had been general, its entire loss is an unprecedented circumstance; whether in a moral view, or as a mechanical question. As far as we are acquainted with the history of Highland manners and usages, the people continued to be, as to their domestic habits, not merely down to 1460, but to 1700, pretty nearly what they were in 1200, and very possibly what they had been up to the times of the Ostermannish invasions, or even to a more distant date. All the establishment of a Highland chief is known. Birt mentions his bard; so does Martin; but we hear nothing of a harper, except in the two instances above mentioned: and as the manners and habits of their day were those of ancient times, there is no reason for supposing that they possessed harps and harpers at a previous period. Nor is it more probable that, when the country was evidently in a state far more improved than it had been during the independence and perpetual warfare of the separate clans, an instrument of this nature should have fallen into disuse or oblivion; particularly as, if it had ever thus

been used, it must have formed an essential ingredient in the business of transmitting traditionary poetry, or of recitation in general, and must also have been a necessary part of the very limited list of the elegancies or amusements of these rude chiefs. It might indeed be said that such poems could not have been recited without music. That remark would, however, be unfounded; because it is well known that the romances of the Scalds and the Minstrels were actually delivered in a sort of recitativo secco, and without the aid of accompaniments. That poems were sometimes chanted to music, is a fact; but it is rather an exception than an usage. It was a different species of performance. In Wales and in Ireland the harp has continued in use to this day; and that it is becoming rare in the former country, is only the consequence of that total change of circumstances by which so many other ancient usages and habits have been abandoned or forgotten.

Of the other musical instruments of the Highlanders, we have little knowledge. The question of the Violin will be examined more properly hereafter. The nature of the Cruit is somewhat obscure, and the total oblivion into which it has fallen, not only here, but in Wales and Ireland, seems to prove that it never could have been much in use. Of the Tiompan I have said all that is likely to be known. It is remembered that the Jew's harp was formerly common in the Highlands, and it is described as used in St. Kilda. But that also has fallen into oblivion; nor has it ever been said that the Highlanders possessed the Stock and Horn of the Lowlands, nor the Syrinx so common among the Gauls. They appear to have been equally ignorant of the Rote, and of some other instruments which the researches of musical antiquaries have shewn to have been common among the distant Gauls and Gallic Normans.

HIGHLAND AND CALEDONIAN MUSIC.

THE present examination of the history and nature of Highland and Caledonian music, will incidentally confirm what I have just said respecting the Highland harp; nor need I point out the value of the evidence, as musicians will readily deduce it for themselves. If the true nature and origin of the peculiar melody for which Scotland has so notedly been distinguished, have so long remained obscure, it must be because no native and competent musician has yet examined it. If I have here trespassed on the province of others, it can only be said that they have had abundant time; and that when those who have a duty to perform do not execute it, others may be excused if, when at length weary of waiting, they interfere. At any rate, some one must make the first step, and, as usual, bear the brunt.

The general character of the Highland vocal airs is familiar to every one; nor would it be easy to quote one which would not answer the purpose of illustrating that of nearly the whole. Nor need I say that they bear no resemblance to the pibrach, or to the martial music, whatever they may to the dancing airs. It is their common feature to be plaintive, whether in the major or the minor key; and few, even among educated musicians, need be told that they are pleasing. Considerable col-

lections of them have been made by different persons; whether to their exhaustion or not, is of no great moment. Among these, while the universal sameness perceptible on a first impression, arises, in a great measure, from their peculiar and distinct character, it will also be found that the variety of melodies is really very limited, and that many of them are mere copies of each other with slight alterations, or different editions of one subject. Unlike the pibrach, these have a regular rhythm; being divisible by bars, properly accented, and limited to the multiples of two, in the usual manner. A few exceptions, which exist, may have arisen merely from the incorrectness of transmission. In general, it will be found that they consist of only one strain: and with respect to the most ancient and genuine, I believe that is invariably true. Where a second is found, as is almost always the case with those which have been borrowed and transferred to the Lowlands, it is commonly a recent addition: generally a modification of the same idea, and very often a tasteless extension of it, produced by wandering through a greater extent of scale. Unless the fault lies in the musicians who have collected these airs, to the neglect of the poetry, many of them appear to be merely instrumental: some, however, are associated to words and sung by the people at their various occupations. It would be desirable to rescue from probable oblivion much more of this poetry than has ever yet been made public: but, unfortunately, most of the musicians who have done this for the airs, have been vulgar and uneducated people; sometimes not even acquainted with the language. Honour yet claims the performance of this task by some competent Highlander. Their Sassanach friends, they may be assured, are fully as much interested about their antiquities as themselves; and they have proved it: but there

are many points from which their ignorance of the language precludes them.

Though we must unavoidably consider the Highlanders as a musical people, it is nevertheless remarkable that very little music is to be heard in the country. Were it not for the indisputable antiquity of this art among them, we might now even imagine that it had never been known to them. I can scarcely remember that, excepting the boat song which the Ulva men sing to the cockneys who visit Staffa, I ever heard five songs throughout all the country during the whole of my acquaintance with it. Once or twice I may have heard a young cow herd, and as often a milk-maid, chanting some "snatches of old tunes" through the nose; once I have heard the fulling song, and once the grinding strains. In St. Kilda, formerly so musical, the art is absolutely forgotten. I can barely recollect a violin; and even the bagpipe is become extremely rare. The exceptions, as to instruments, will be found among the pipers still maintained by the chiefs; and, as might be anticipated, on the borders of the Lowlands. If this music was Celtic, as I hope to shew, its loss could not have been the result of Norwegian and unmusical intermixture, because Martin's testimony is against that conclusion. That it has arisen from the general change which Highland manners have undergone in the last century, is easily said: but I know not how that should have produced this particular effect; which is nevertheless unquestionable.

It is a remarkable circumstance respecting the Gaelic airs, that they serve, very frequently, a double, and apparently opposite, purpose. The slow vocal tunes are often the dancing ones also, and the conversion may be traced in numerous instances; excluding, of course, the swarm of modern reels and strathspeys which have, with

the assistance of the violin and of new ideas, abandoned the plain and simple melodies of antiquity. Every page of every collection will furnish examples. It is the practice, however, and not the possibility, which is peculiar. I know not that it exists in any other music, national or refined: but musicians well know how versatile, as to velocity, many melodies are, and how easily even plagiarisms can be concealed under the metamorphosis.

All musicians know that the scale on which these genuine airs are composed, is of a peculiar construction; and it is from this that their character is derived. It is a scale of five notes instead of seven, deficient in the fourth and seventh in the major mode; or, taking the entire octave, it contains only six. So marked is the effect of this scale, that it is impossible to move through it in any manner, without producing the semblance of a Scottish air. This then is the real distinction, as it is the cause, of that peculiarity in our national music which every one recognizes, and of which Scotland has, unquestionably, reason to boast. How a peculiar scale gives a character to music, is well known to refined musicians in other cases; when, for that purpose, they designedly pass by some note in their perfect scale. Nor is it unlikely that the very possession of this scale has been the cause of the music: that it has generated both the national airs and the national taste. It requires knowledge, or design at least, to compose in the diatonic scale; but, on this one, the merest hazard will and must produce an air; the artist having nothing to do but to recollect the key note and attend to the measure and accent. It is well and truly said, that the cat which gallops over the black keys of the piano forte plays a Scotch tune. It is this facility also which has produced the numberless compositions existing, and which will help to account for their sameness, as well as for their frequently contemptible na-

ture: for, even on this facile scale, taste and invention are required to guide the artist's hand to what is truly good.

If I have taken a correct view of this subject, I have laid, at least a foundation, for explaining the origin of Scottish music; as the question at large involves many other particulars. Deferring these for the present, we must ascend yet a step, and try to discover whence the Scots, or the Highlanders rather, acquired their scale, and, if possible, why the surrounding nations of Europe possess only the well-known diatonic and chromatic one. I have here substituted the word Highlanders for Scots, because I hope to show that the basis of our national music is derived from a Highland source: and I may now add, that I consider that source as purely Celtic, and as distinct from any Norwegian mixture. This people formed the original inhabitants; and the music in question, I conceive to have been, in its foundation, rigidly Celtic.

The origin and cause of a musical scale have been so often examined by mathematicians and musicians, that it is unnecessary to recur to that subject. But the world has never yet known but two modifications of it; assuming here that of which musicians now seem satisfied, that the much argued enharmonic and chromatic divisions of the Greeks are referable to the present diatonic and chromatic division of the common or perfect scale. The other is the scale of five notes in question; on the nature of whose intervals, mathematically and musically considered, I need not here enter. Now this peculiar succession exists among the Oriental nations; being found in China as well as Hindostan, and in the islands of that ocean. So accurately is this the fact, that it has produced exactly the same results as to the melodies of these people, as it has done in Scotland. The Chinese melodies were long ago illustrated by the Jesuits, by Father

Amyot, and the existence of this scale in that country ascertained. Many of the Hindoo airs which have been collected at various times, have been found perfectly similar, though there are some of a more refined character; and those recently brought from Java, are, like these, so perfectly Scottish, that a distinction could not be recognized. If a wider connexion has not been traced in the East, it must be attributed to the want of observers. Yet, if that be of any value on this question, Lempriere mentions an air which he heard when in Morocco, as resembling a Scottish one. Sir Robert Porter also describes a musician in Courdistan, playing a sweet melody of an Irish character. This evidence is the more valuable, in one sense, because this traveller was not a musician and had no system. Yet it is to be regretted that he was not such, and aware of the value of this fact; as, through the countries which he examined, he would doubtless have found ample confirmation of the views here held out. And it is to be expected that when musical travellers shall turn their attention to this subject in these countries, the same scale will be found to accompany all the other particulars which mark the common origin of these nations.

Thus then, as we trace the language as well as the origin of the great Celtic people, to this Oriental spring, we may probably, with safety, trace to the same source, that musical scale which the Highlanders and the Irish at least, now among the most perfect existing remains of that far-spread nation, have preserved. Thus the Highland, or the Scottish, national music, is, like the Gaelic language, the dark Celtic blood and breed, and the few superstitions or monuments that derive from this source, one of the relics of the original and remote antiquity of our peculiar Celtic ancestors: and, being that relic, it is

an additional proof, if even esteemed a feeble one, of a descent which seems to require none in addition to the much stronger ones which I have enumerated in other places, and which all the ridicule which Ledwich and others have thrown on this subject are insufficient to overturn.

Now, though I have said that the production of airs was almost necessarily a consequence of the possession of such a scale, there is also reason to suppose that the Celtic nation was inherently musical; whether from organization, or from habits generated by this cause, it must be impossible to determine. It is as true of the Welsh as of the Irish and Highlanders. In Cornwall, there are traces of the same faculty; but respecting Britanny and the Helvetic Celts of the Valais, I am uninformed on this point. These are, I believe, all the purer relics of the western division of this ancient nation to which we have any access: nor do we know well what the condition of the latter provinces, as a people, was. The proof by contrast adds force to this argument. The existence of a national music is the criterion of an ancient musical taste, when that cannot be found in historical record. Now although the harp was known to the Saxons and Goths, it is not only comparatively modern, but it has never been asserted or insinuated that the Goths, and more particularly the earlier ones, were a musical people. It is equally certain, or I mistake much, that those scions of it in Europe now known to us, have no national, or, as I may venture to call it, historical music. That of the low country Scots which has not the Celtic character, and which, being now often associated with poetry of Scandinavian or Gothic connexions, would seem, on a superficial view, to have been derived from that source, is plainly a modern music, resulting from a mixture of

the ancient Scottish with that of general Europe in later days.

The want of an ancient music is peculiarly remarkable in the case of the Germans; assuredly the most musical people now in the universe; not to offend Italy by the comparison. It seems to be acknowledged by themselves, that they possess no ancient, or traditional and national, music; and it is well known to all musicians at what time their present talents first appeared, and how they were derived from that Italian school on which they have so enhanced. It is the same for the Scandinavian nation; the popular music of which is not ancient and national, but derived from Germany. Those airs which are now called popular in Germany, are plainly of a modern character; and all the Norwegian ones which I have examined, are palpably of the same school, "parcé detorta." The connexion of the Scandinavian and Teutonic poetry with the ancient Scottish, is a different affair: but Jamieson, who has so well illustrated this, and to whom we are so much indebted, has fallen into an error in supposing that there was a necessary and ancient connexion in their music also. Hence his own testimony is peculiarly valuable, when he remarks that the Danes and Norwegians admit that they possess no ancient popular airs. He is unwilling to believe it himself; feeling properly, as a Scot should do, and unaware of the distinction which I have attempted to make. The single rude ballad melody which he has printed, proves nothing; nor, were more of these to be collected, as he insinuates in another place to be a likely event, would it establish the desired fact.

The existence of this ancient poetry does not prove that of an ancient music, as I cursorily noticed in speaking of the Highland harp; because when the ballad was not merely repeated, it was chanted, not sung. Hence

the remark does not affect what I have elsewhere said of the union of poetry and music; because of the distinction between lyric, or musical, poetry, and that of the narrative kind; the mode of delivering which, seems to be admitted by antiquaries to have been what I have now stated.

I admit, however, that the question of the early national music of Germany is somewhat obscure, nor can I discover that their own authors have illustrated it. But I cannot find, at the same time, that they even imagine themselves to be the heirs of an ancient national style, like ourselves. The music of Scotland is known as such, and has long been known, all over musical Europe. Had Germany possessed an ancient music of any fame, it must surely have been, even better known; since among a people so musical as they at present are, it could not fail to have been illustrated and displayed. That they had songs and music at an early period, cannot however be denied. Love songs, war songs or songs of heroes, songs in praise of the Devil, as it is said, and Spottleider, or blasphemous songs, were common throughout the nation, insomuch that the nuns were forbidden to sing the first, and last species. As to the songs to his Majesty of beneath, the Saxons were ordered, under heavy penalties, to abstain from singing them over the graves of the deceased. It is probable that Thor or Odin are the personages here in question; and that they were thus Nicknamed by some ardent preacher of that religion which the Great Karl crammed down them by dint of the apostolic sword. Another proof of the existence of some kind of popular songs is, that when Hatto Archbishop of Maynz betrayed Count Adalbert of Babenberg, the people, in their rage, made songs on him; "which music" "vulgo concinnatur et canitur." The period is about

the latter end of the ninth century. In the tenth, music, like poetry, was a regular study; and Hroswith, a nun of Gandersheim, wrote and composed a religious comedy, or opera. Rhaban Maurus also notices the cultivation, under the Carlovingian race, of music; which he calls so noble and profitable a study, that the services of religion cannot be performed without it.

Yet all this, as I have already said, proves nothing in favour of an early national music. The religious music was plainly borrowed, and Gregorian; because another of these early writers complains of the manner in which his countrymen performed the Gregorian chants. The music of the ninth century, as far as it was popular, is probably that very music which Wales and Ireland borrowed from their Teutonic or Saxon invaders; and its existence confirms what I have said elsewhere of the difference between the music of Wales and that of Scotland. It was probably a music in the modern scale, derived from that of the Church, as all this style appears originally to have been; and, possessing no peculiar character, it has vanished. It had no merit capable of preserving it to distant times: and whatever its antiquity may thus be, it is still a modern music compared to the Celtic or Scottish, as it is a modern music in its character.

The cultivation of music, as well as of poetry, in ancient Etruria, seems to offer another probability in favour of the ancient musical taste of the Scottish Celts, and to aid alike in indicating the source whence it was derived. I have taken occasion to speak of this people elsewhere, so that I need only here say, that, with a common origin, that nation is allowed to have cultivated music successfully, and to have been much attached to this art, as it was to poetry. I have little doubt, that,

could any of these melodies be recovered, they would be found to point to the same scale, and thus to confirm alike, the Oriental source of our own, and of the most ancient, but now forgotten, Italian music; as well as to prove the original and inherent musical propensities of our most immediate Celtic ancestry. If also, as seems to admit of little doubt, Etruria taught the arts of design to Greece, even the modern Italians may be indebted to their aboriginal predecessors for that musical feeling which gave them the lead in modern music, and for that supremacy, which, if they have been at length rivalled in it, they at least retain the honour of having participated, only as the master does with a rival pupil. Nor will my friends in the Highlands be displeased to find that they can thus, in their music, claim an affinity with Italy, on better grounds than the visionary demands in favour of Rizzio or King James. I shall only add to this, that it would be very desirable to investigate the popular and rustic airs of Italy, to see whether any traces of this species of music might not yet be found among them; as is the case with the language, and, in some provinces, very strikingly with the Celtic accent. It is only for musicians who have the opportunity, to be aware of this speculation; as the search could then be attended with no difficulty: and that it has not been done, must probably be attributed to mere neglect of a circumstance which had not entered their minds. I need only add, that as the bagpipe is still in use among the Italian peasantry, and as this instrument is probably Oriental, it seems to come in aid of the same views: and it is not unlikely that if such Celtic melodies exist in that country, they will be found in the same districts and among the same people to whom this instrument is still a national one: and in those also where the language still partakes of that original dialect which was the founda-

tion of the purer Latin. I cannot help thinking that Burney, who could have illustrated this as few are ever likely to do, must have entertained similar views. He does not even give a hint of what he meant, when he said that this music could probably be traced to a very high antiquity; and though he held out the promise of investigating the question at some future day, he never again touched on it, nor permitted any one to conjecture what was in his mind on the subject. I should be pleased to think that he had entertained the same opinions.

I might easily pursue this subject further than would be convenient; and will therefore now only add, that where proofs and illustrations may yet be wanting, the defect must be attributed to the neglect of the very few musicians who have paid attention to the antiquities of their art. The subject of ancient and national music has never yet experienced the attention which it deserves: it has too often been despised as mere matter for the populace. There is much reason to regret that Burney did not undertake this branch of his subject. Musicians have not often been antiquaries, in the extended sense of the term; and our real antiquaries, the few that are worthy of that name, have not been musicians. Such an association is essential to a due investigation of this subject; and those who may choose to undertake it, ought to recollect that the pursuit, in this form, would probably lead to many valuable illustrations, not only with respect to the progress of the science and the art themselves, and to that of musical instruments, musical scales, and melodies, but of points relating to the ancient connexions of nations.

The way is thus opened for showing, that inasmuch as the Scots have a national music, it is only as they are

Celts. The Low country, therefore, has no proper claims on that of which it boasts; it has adopted, but not invented. As of Pictish or Gothic descent, it could have had none; or that should have been found alike in all the collateral tribes; among which, however, it has no existence. It is unjustly and ignorantly, therefore, that the Lowland Scots censure or contemn the English as being devoid of a national music. They are the same people originally, and their claims, inasmuch as they are equally Goths, are equally deficient. If England has no national melodies, Scotland has none, in as far as it is of Teutonic or Scandinavian descent: what it actually possesses is Celtic music, and it has borrowed from that race. The English, too, are no further deficient in this respect than the French and the Germans: it is even a question whether Spain or Italy can produce other national music than that which has arisen in modern times from cultivation; though, if my views be correct, Italy ought to possess a Celtic and ancient melody. Certainly, however, this has not yet been proved. On the subject of Spanish national music indeed, we are but ill informed; and there is something in the character of what passes for such, that is worth investigating. In as far as it is an African nation, it ought, not only to possess the Celtic music through the Carthaginians, but the Oriental parent, under another modification, through the later Moors. This forms part of an investigation from which an industrious and able musical antiquary might derive fame, and by which he would confer an essential benefit on the history of this art. As to the English, it is the Highlanders who have the real right to contemn them; and, if they choose, they may equally despise their Lowland neighbours on this point. These are their pupils; and had they rested their various claims to superi-

ority on ground as strong, no one would, no one at least ought to have disputed them. This particular stand they have never taken; unaware of their own claims; and I shall be glad to think that I have firmly placed a feather in that bonnet whence some others seem to have been in danger of falling. I even hope that my aid on this point may restore me to the dinners which I have forfeited by my heterodoxy in the matter of cabbages, and on a few other subjects.

Of course, it can never be said that the low country Scots had no proper airs in ancient times: because it never can be known what portions of the Celtic nation remained after the invasions and settlements of the Picts, or German tribes. Such relics as may thus remain to them, they must, however, claim as Celts; but it must still be admitted that the great mass, or rather perhaps the foundation, of this national music, must have been preserved or produced by the greatest entire mass of this original population. Here was the storehouse, and hence were derived the models from which the present collection of really national music has been generated. I may now therefore proceed to examine by evidence, that which, thus far, may seem, to some, but an antiquarian speculation bottomed on an insufficient foundation; and see whether we cannot trace to the Highlands, that which is now, properly, called Scottish music, and rescue the fair claims of the mountains from unmerited neglect.

It is necessary, for this purpose, to extricate the subject from the confusion which has been introduced into it by the composition and by the alterations of airs in modern times, when the more perfect scale and more perfect instruments of Europe in general, became known. To transcribe specimens of the airs for this purpose, would be here impossible, for want of room; so that if

you feel interested in the subject, you must take up the various Highland and Lowland collections that have so often been published and republished, as a kind of map to guide you through the musical obscure.

It will be found that the most ancient and simple, the most pure and genuine, in short, of the Highland melodies, are limited to the capacity of that imperfect scale which may be called the Oriental one. Hence they are easily performed on their imperfect instrument, the bagpipe; a coincidence which may assist in indicating, with other circumstances, the Celtic and consequently Eastern pedigree of this instrument. But the violin was also in use in the Highlands; although how remotely, is unknown. In Martin's time, in 1700 or thereabouts, it was common. Now it is supposed that this instrument was introduced from the Lowlands, in the ordinary progress of communication from modern Europe; for Brantome remarks that it was used in the churches of Edinburgh. This is an antiquarian point that will admit of dispute; at least as it relates to a stringed instrument played by a bow: though the modern violin may have been thus borrowed. The rebec was a violin, as far as the present question of composition is concerned; and this was the instrument which everywhere preceded its more perfect progeny. Musicians have imagined that the violin reached Wales also from England, and thus from Europe; but it has been their error to suppose it a modern invention. It seems no less ancient than it is Oriental; although not precisely under its modern form. The use of the bow has been long known to the Chinese; and the whole question, as it relates to the family of the violin, hinges on this invention; be the instrument to be played on, a mandolin or a fiddle; strung with wire or with catgut. The Chinese are not a borrowing people, and their strange

musical instruments are all original. Whatever else of European they have borrowed, it has not been their music. But the Eastern antiquity of bowed instruments is still more confirmed by the existence of a native mandolin, or some similar instrument, in Tartary, where the use of the bow is familiar, and has been so from all times; as Sir John Hawkins long ago has shown us from the more ancient authors whence he borrowed. Persia knows the same expedient; and, in Arabia, there is a fiddle with three brass strings, a mandolin therefore, which is played by a bow, and which is of unknown antiquity. It is still more remarkable that the Arabic name of this native violin is Rebab; the very word whence our Rebec, the name of the original European violin, is derived, and the identical Ribible of Chaucer, which was accompanied by a "loud quinible;" the ancient harmony to which I formerly alluded. There seems therefore little doubt that the Celts, whether in the shape of Welsh or Highlanders, Cymri or Gael, had their violin or rebec from the same ancient source as they derived their scale; and that although the Highlanders must, of course, have taken the modern violin from the modern improvement, they were acquainted with one of similar, if inferior, powers.

On this view of the violin, although most of the airs which exceed the powers of the bagpipe are most probably of comparatively modern invention, some of them may be much more ancient than I once imagined. Unquestionably, many of the Highland melodies have been composed on it, at whatever period; but it is still remarkable, that though thus acquiring greater powers, these composers have generally adhered, and rigidly also, to the Oriental scale. When the fourth and seventh in the major mode occur, as is not unusual, they are treated as passing notes; forming no part of the radical harmony

or real melody; and the national character being thus consistently preserved. The deficient relative notes of the minor are similarly treated. More recently, such mixed airs have been exceedingly multiplied; modulating into a greater number of keys, ranging through a much wider extent of intervals, and adopting successions of notes incapable of being executed on the bagpipe. It is in attempting these that the imperfections of that instrument are especially felt: and from this it has incurred so much dislike, by educated or correct ears, or by those unused to its imperfections.

It is natural to ask why, when so many, or perhaps all, of these ancient airs are originally vocal, the people have adhered to this scale, and have not taken advantage of the wonderful powers of the voice. This question is a natural, though an inconsiderate one; and although musicians have often disputed this point, I believe that no instance can be produced where the powers of the human voice have been made the foundation of a style in melody. When Beauford, assuredly no musician though a writer on Irish music, speaks of an "oral scale," though he is only doing what other antiquaries have done before him, he is wandering out of his element. No oral scale has yet been produced, nor even its existence rendered probable. The voice is an imitative, though a natural, instrument, and does but follow at a distance that which has arisen from improvements in the mechanical powers of artificial ones. The human voice has never yet appeared to lead the way in forming melodies: and as little does the mind seem capable of conceiving them, without examples from the same source. The powers and notes of instruments are the real language of music; and as we cannot think without words, so we cannot conceive melodies without the previous aid

or example of these mechanical means. It is thus that the art of composition, or invention, in music, has always kept pace with, or rather followed, the improvements of musical instruments; as the faculty of thinking has accompanied those of language; though there is a retroaction in both cases which is apt to obscure the subject, and which also prevents this general rule from being rigidly true: in either case, with certain necessary limitations, it is a hand without tools.

There appears indeed to be a most important connexion between music and mechanical invention: and hence polished music has run a parallel course with other improvements, with mechanical contrivances. Thus far may music be considered artificial rather than natural. The ideas are, or at least their basis originally was, suggested by the mechanism; the mind has been taught to feel and think by the dexterity of the hand. The foundation at least is thus given, and the train commenced: it is the business of a delicate sensibility and of a creative imagination to pursue it: and in attaining the elevation to which he has thus mounted, the musician is apt to forget the aid which enabled him to overcome the first and most difficult steps of the ascent.

If we examine the progress of musical composition, we shall easily see that melody, or what is nearly the same thing, harmony, the pleasure arising either from the consonance or succession of notes, has been chiefly derived, in this circuitous or indirect manner, from mathematical division and mechanical construction: whatever original provision nature may have made for this subject in the nature of the organ, or sense of hearing, as, in the matter of colours, she has in the eye. If the voice has followed the hand, so has the ear: and if that which the hand has never executed, has never been performed by

the voice, neither is it apprehended by the mind when executed by others. The savage sings no other notes than his barbarous drum or flute have taught him; and the melody which exceeds the narrow range of his experience and habits, falls dead from his ear. To the native of Owhyhee or Nootka, whose nasal flute possesses but three notes, and these nearly semitones, an European flute or violin speaks an unknown language: it is not only unknown, but a jargon; and instead of merely listening with insensibility, he perhaps feels pain from that which has ravished the ears of thousands. Nor does this arise from defective organization or want of sensibility; as is proved by the facility with which those savage nations on whom the experiment has been fairly tried, have received a musical education. For this we are indebted to the Moravian missionaries; with whom the musical part of religious worship, is an object of much attention and equal refinement. They have discovered that the Esquimaux of Labrador acquire rapidly the art of singing the most scientific German harmonies in parts, as well as that of playing the music of the same school on the violin. The same has happened to the Hottentots, once the most despised of savages; and here too it has been discovered that, with a flexibility and power of voice equal to that of the most noted Italian singers, they learn without difficulty to comprehend, as well as to execute, the most intricate melodies of that school. When I quote my friend Latrobe as authority for these assertions, they will not be disputed.

If the musical ear of a New Zealander has thus been formed from his drum and his nasal flute, it is equally probable that the delicate enharmonic ears of the ancient Greeks, if they were really such as has been imagined, derived their habits and powers alike from the peculiar

structure and divisions of their lyres and flutes. The people remain, their organization remains, and their general acuteness and sensibility are what they were in the days of Periander and Alcibiades: but the lyres, the flutes, and the melodies, have vanished together, and the musical faculty of the present Greeks is now no other than our own; it is probably less, since it is surpassed by those of Germany and Italy.

I am not unaware, however, that this asserted fact has been doubted and disputed by learned musicians. It has been thought, by many whose names must command respect, that the presumed enharmonic scale and intervals of Greece had no existence in practice, but were limited to the speculations of their mathematicians on the musical canon, or the arithmetical ratios of intervals. It is attempted to deduce this from the writings of Gaudentius, of Aristoxenus, and of others. How obscure these writers are, no less than the subject itself is, I need scarcely say, when even Cicero remarks that the Elements of Aristoxenus are utterly unintelligible. Yet against these opinions, we have the positive testimony of a French musician that this might at least have been the fact, as, in Egypt, he found a stringed instrument enharmonically tuned, and accompanying a voice which did actually execute these small intervals. That the voice can execute them as the ear can distinguish them, is unquestionable; because the mere act of singing out of tune is the performing of an interval, often much less than the one in question. If singers cannot actually execute them now, designedly and certainly, as the notes of a regular melody, it has probably arisen from want of education and practice, and from an established habit in the organ of voice, of forming only the wider chromatic and diatonic intervals.

If we therefore admit, that the ancient music of Greece was thus enharmonic, we cannot otherwise explain why the musicians of our own European schools, with infinitely more invention, producing and feeling the powers of melodies and harmonies of which we are certain that the Greeks could have had no conception, and rioting through all the range of the chromatic scale, are still compelled to limit even their enharmonic chords within very narrow bounds. The fashions of our instruments, of which the violin genus alone possesses such powers, have determined those intervals which the general ear alone understands and admits to be music.

But even we ourselves have witnessed the increase, and almost the rise, of this practice, in the hands that lie from Haydn to Beethoven; nor, with the unlimited powers which the family of the violin affords, is it improbable that it is destined to carry to a far higher pitch that revolution which succeeded what may be called the Italian school of Corelli; and which, if his name may be taken as a specimen, may also be dated, as well from the period of the elder Bach as from any other. This is the path which we are now treading; nor is it difficult, in retracing it, to see whither it tends; nor to feel that we are far yet from having exhausted musical invention. We, the audience, are at the same time sensible that we follow the composer with but a very lagging pace. Many of us remember when Beethoven was Greek and Hebrew to our ears: we have lived to see audiences begin by wondering what the composer meant, and whether the performers had not mistaken their parts; we have lived to see that scarcely another could command their attention. Nay, there are some of us who can recollect when Haydn, and even Boccherini, was as Beethoven; when the shorter step from Haydn to Mozart was a serious effort, and when

the prudent kept silence and pretended to believe, in hopes that the day of admiration would come at last.

An interesting question arises incidentally out of this consideration, relating to the music of ancient Greece. We have heard more than enough of its effects over the minds of the people; not only from ancient, but from modern authors; the latter generally talking of what they did not understand, and doing what Swift and Pope and Johnson might as well have done, when they confessed that they did not know one note from another. Thus they have taunted modern musicians and ridiculed modern music as if she, "heavenly maid," had never sung but when "young in ancient Greece." It is the flute of Timotheus which is to raise one mortal to the skies, as the harp of Orpheus is to drag another out of hell: in soberer terms, to rouse passions or feelings incapable of being stimulated or affected by Pergolesi or Mozart; and equally, "parva componere magnis," insensible to "Waly Waly" or "Scots who have with Wallace bled." Musicians, and musical antiquaries, who have laboured on this subject, have found no such traces of power, no such probabilities, in the music in question, nor any evidence of merit capable of operating such effects. The instruments of the ancient Greeks are sufficiently well known; and, if these views are correct, what musicians have not found, could not have existed. Not only there could have been no other instrumental music composed by this people than such as their instruments allowed them to perform, but their voices could not have displayed other powers, or executed other music than their instruments. Thus, their vocal compositions could have been of no better or more refined character than their instrumental, whatever that might have been; and that they were extremely simple, appears certain.

As to the effect of their music, or of any music, on the mind, as recorded by poets or exaggerators, that is a complex affair; originating from many sources conjoined, and, chiefly, from human sympathy; commonly from the kindlings of social feeling. Indeed if we examine this question rationally, we may conclude, without any disparagement to the Greeks or to Greek taste and feeling, that the principal effects thus described, were what have often been witnessed elsewhere; those of music upon an infant people. It has been the mistake of the authors who have thus maintained the marvellous effects of the Greek music, to confound two dissimilar periods of this country, their ancient savage state with their civilized one; while it is well known that this clamour was made by mere literary men, not musicians, during the warfares in favour, alternately, of ancient and modern learning and ability. Sir William Temple does not scruple to talk in this high tone of the Greek music, (what some one has called "high nonsense,") confessing, at the same time, what every one knew, that he was totally unacquainted with the subject. That the civilized Greeks may have possessed a better and more refined music than musicians have been able to discover any traces of, need not be denied, however doubtful it may be. But on this particular question of the wonderful effects of their music, we have their own incontrovertible testimony, when they complain, in their better days, that their music was not such as it had been in those of Orpheus and Amphion. Assuredly the Athens of Pericles could neither have built cities nor tamed wild beasts with its lyre; but this is as if the Highlander whose heart beats to the Gathering of his Clan or to the reel of Tulloch, were to complain that music had degenerated in the hands of Mozart, because his sword is not ready to jump from the scabbard at "Ah

perdona." It may even be doubted whether, at the best periods of Greece, its musicians and its music were what many have fondly supposed; assuming it as necessary that, because they had a refined taste in poetry and the arts of design, they must have possessed equal taste and invention in music. There is no such necessary connexion between these, as might easily be shown by examples; but, even on this point, we have ancient testimony which it is difficult to evade. Aristotle says it is better that the singers should be accompanied by the flute than the lyre, because the former concealed the imperfections of their voices. The singer who should trust to such an expedient now, would not perform a second time before an European audience of the lowest cast. But I must not go deeper into this subject. To return to the simpler question of the imitative proceedings of the voice, it is easy to see, in pursuing this principle, how the plain chant of the early ecclesiastical service was connected with, and maintained, if not absolutely generated, by the original and simple organ: while it is equally obvious that the introduction of the violin and other instruments, of greater range and volubility and more accurate intonation, disclosed to modern voices those powers of which they were not before conscious, as much as they led the way to that revolution in musical composition which has produced the inexhaustible stores that are now open to us. If we have a Catalani, it is because we first had a violin: and the warbling race of the Billingtons are but the imitators of the flute and hautboy which they so often rival or excel.

It is the same for an inferior department of the art; musical effect. Every thing that composition could have done, in harmony as in melody, must have arisen in time, from experience of the powers of the violin family.

It is far otherwise for a department which depends on the qualities of instruments, as far as tone, or power and variety of sound, are concerned, and which often borrows, even from their imperfections. This too comprises a revolution in music, in the branch of symphony, accurately speaking, undreamt of by the ancient Italian school. From the violins, they had made but timid steps, first to the flute and hautboy, and then to the horn tribe; but the voice of war has been heard in our orchestras, and the military instruments of their German pupils have now burst on our ears like the thunder of their own cannon; producing effects which the Italians had never contemplated, and suggesting inventions in melody and harmony which, but for this innovation, might for ever have slept in peace. If the Italian school still holds out against this heterodoxy, it is as much from a defect of what I here consider education, as from pride. Those who know the Messiah as its great author left it, and in its present state, will scarcely doubt of the acquisition which symphony has thus made; and still less will those who compare the best Italian compositions of this class, with the Transalpine and powerful productions of Cherubini, Mozart, Haydn, and Beethoven. It is scarcely too much to say that, for modern symphony, we are indebted to the mechanical arts, and that the great composers whom I have named are, in a certain sense, the offspring of the turner, the joiner, and the brass-founder.

To return from what is rather an illustration than a digression, I have shown, in another place, that the harp, as well as the violin, was known to the Highlanders. But I there also attempted to prove that it could not have been common; and the arguments then used seem confirmed by the nature of the Highland musical compositions. To judge rightly on this subject, it is best to com-

pare these with those of their neighbour nation Ireland, and of their brother Celts the Welsh. Between the melodies of the Irish and the Highlanders, there is, in many cases, a perfect resemblance; while, as might be expected from a variety of causes, the same airs are often claimed by both. It is easy to imagine that the same ancient melody should have been as much the property of the one as the other; as happens probably respecting some of the poetry. It is equally easy to suppose that Irish harpers in Scotland, should have composed airs thus claiming a right to both countries, as I formerly showed to have been a fact; and it is further obvious that where the character was so similar, airs passing between the two countries might be appropriated by both, without justifying a charge of plagiarism on either side.

But the Irish and the Welsh have, both, a class of music to which the Highlanders have no title, and which no intelligent Scottish musician will claim. These are the melodies which belong to the harp; abounding in Ireland, but forming nearly the whole of that Welsh music which has been collected, if not all which exists. The distance of style between the latter and Scottish music, is complete. The perfect diatonic and chromatic scale must long have been known to Wales; while it has also been acted on so as to regulate their compositions, instead of having been sacrificed, as in the Highlands, to the Oriental one. This has also, if in a less degree, been the case in Ireland. The Welsh, in a similar manner, have written in a far greater range of scale; while, by their more perfect system, they have been enabled to modulate into a much greater number of keys. Their knowledge of music has been greater, and what they have produced is of a more perfect kind. Thus also the expression of the music differs. Adagio movements and

a sostenuto character are almost essential to the ancient Highland melodies. The harp admits of no such expression; and thus the Welsh airs assume a more allegro character, or else the want of a prolonged tone is remedied in the composition, by substituting a florid style of descant on the fundamental notes of the melody.

I need not prolong this part of the subject where it offers an argument against the common use of the harp in the Highlands; nor is it worth while to say how easily any apparent exceptions may be explained; and, that, chiefly from the former connexions between Scotland and Ireland. Nor need I here do more than point out the argument which the absence of harp music in the Highlands, offers in favour of the Irish claims to the Ossianic relics, as I have noticed it sufficiently elsewhere. But it may be worth while to ask why the Welsh have preserved an ancient and diatonic music, almost to the exclusion of that which I consider as Celtic and Oriental. It is likely that this difficulty may be solved by historical considerations. The Highlanders continued to form a separate people till a very late period; and, I may add, a divided, and, comparatively, a barbarous one: retaining all their ancient habits and usages. The Welsh, on the contrary, were united at a distant period as one empire; and when they became a portion of England, that event was also of a remote date. Thus they parted, long ago, with most of their distinctions; and in adopting a better style of music, it is probable that though they neither entirely abandoned or lost that which they ought once to have had in common with the Highlands, they borrowed so much more from a better school as to render their original melodies less predominant. It is probable, therefore, that even their ancient and national music is modern compared to our own: and it is equally to be expected that if their

most ancient airs were to be collected and examined, so as to be freed from modern improvements, they would present the Oriental character. To a certain extent, this is, in fact, yet true: nor, in examining the catalogue of Welsh melodies, is it difficult to trace the obvious marks of the Celtic character and the Oriental scale. It is easy to see, without prolonging this part of the enquiry, how the same reasoning applies to Ireland.

But such are the claims of the Welsh, that they will not be very well pleased with this solution; nor can it be denied that they have an appearance of reason on their side, although some portions of their demands are not less wild than those of Irish antiquaries. So high are their claims to antiquity, for their music as for every thing else, that they produce a King Blegored, who, in the year of the world 2069, was called the God of Harmony. Though their music, in some shape, should be as ancient as their language, or as the nation itself, as might be argued from my own system, such pretensions as this render all systems ridiculous. Thus also they claim the discovery of harmony, or counterpoint, before the twelfth century; founding this demand on a passage in Giraldus; which, it must be admitted, is very difficult to evade, although he is not always entitled to implicit credit: far from it. He says positively that they do not sing in unison, but in many different parts, in as many parts as there are performers; at length terminating in one common organic melody in B flat. It is plain that he was not a musician; so that this passage is abundantly obscure. If there could be any doubt of that, he speaks of the treble part playing "sub" (under), "obtuso grossioris cordæ sonitu," and of an irregular regularity, a discordant concord, making the melody harmonious and perfect, beginning in a soft mood; and so on. But it cannot be con-

sidered as applied to a concert in unisons and octaves; as he opposes to the Welsh performances, those of Cumberland, where this latter practice alone, he says, is known. I cannot pretend to elucidate what has troubled all musicians: but neither Burney, nor the French and German musical antiquaries, have been able to discover any traces of real counterpoint in Europe before the fifteenth century. Still, the real period of the invention of counterpoint seems far from determined: while to this evidence of the Welsh Bishop, there is added the much more puzzling one of Garcilasso, who says that the Peruvians understood harmony, and played in parts, on compound pipes made of canes glued together. Thus it must remain for future enquiry.

It is a remarkable circumstance, that, although the Highlanders thus possessed this ancient music, they never appear to have cultivated it as the Irish and the Welsh did; and hence we may assist in explaining the superior progress of the two latter people. To this hour, they have not claimed or defended their rights to a musical antiquity; neglecting it, as they did the Ossianic poetry till Macpherson attempted to vindicate it for them. If they had their colleges of pipers, it was for instruction on that instrument alone; while the harp, as I have shown, was neglected, or suffered to fall into disuse; if it ever was common. In Wales, it was far otherwise; and the difference may, perhaps, be explained by the different state of the two countries: the one cultivating the arts of peace under its native princes, and the other, first a prey, for ages, to a foreign and ferocious people, and, subsequently, in a state of even worse anarchy, under its native and divided chiefs. In Wales, there were Eisteddfods, or meetings of the bards and musicians, triennially; and the musician, as well as the poet and the herald, was

a distinct officer, bearing a considerable rank in the Royal Household. A Welsh Prince also was a somewhat different personage from a Highland chief. The antiquity of these meetings is unknown; but of how much importance the poetry and music of Wales were considered, is but too well known from the conduct of Edward. They had nevertheless revived, affording a strong proof of the superior attachment of the Welsh to these liberal arts, when, after Owen Glendower's rebellion, Henry IV was induced to repeat the same oppressive conduct; nor was it till the reign of Henry the Seventh, himself a Tudor, that the Eisteddfods were renewed.

I must not, however, quit this part of the subject, without noticing the pretensions which the Irish set up, of being themselves the fountain of Welsh music. This also stands on the testimony of Giraldus, which seems, for this point, particularly worthless. He says, that, at the end of the eleventh century, Gryffyd ap Cynan, having been educated in Ireland, invited the best musicians to Wales, and that he brought Welsh music and instruments over from Ireland. In a limited sense, that is possible; but it could not prove, against internal evidence, that Wales learned its music of Ireland. By his own showing, he is contradicted; because, if that music had then first been introduced, it could not have been in the state of perfection in Wales which he describes. There is an utter difference, moreover, between the Welsh and the Irish harps; while an ancient Celtic music, independent of that of the harp derived from another source, must have been possessed by the Welsh as well as the Irish Celts, and must probably also have been best cultivated in the nation that was least troubled by foreign invasion and conquest. The Welsh have their poetry independent of Ireland, and must have had their music also; for

these sister arts were not only as inseparable as they are commonly reputed, but were here, peculiarly so. Half of the trouble of all these investigations, arises from the ignorance and fictions of such writers as Giraldus and Boethius; though we may grant to the former much real merit. But the whole of the Irish claims are marked by that egregious fabling, (not to call it merely credulity,) by which they have rendered all their demands, on antiquity of all kinds, neglected, and almost ludicrous. They should learn to be contented with the general concession of a state of considerable civilization at a remote period, instead of seeking for imaginary proofs in adopting romantic and fictitious tales and traditions. Such are the evils arising from the dreams of Keating, O'Halloran, Warner, and others: a King Tighearnmas who succeeded to the Irish Monarchy in 2815, writings as ancient as Moses, a Concovar Mac Nessa who resembled Hiero, and Milesian colonies which introduced music and poetry, no one knows when. I need not name the great champion of the Irish music; but, omitting his knowledge of antiquities, we may easily conjecture how well adapted he was to write on music, when he everywhere mistakes the meaning of chromatic, enharmonic, diesis, scales, and so forth; and speaks of the major third as consisting of five semi-tones. He also talks of the English church music of 1660, as resembling the bleating of brute beasts; when England had been for a century in the possession of such sacred compositions as those of Tallis, Tye, and many others. Thus another writer on this subject, proves all that requires proof, by presuming what the ancient Irish "might," "would," and "should," have done, instead of showing what they did perform; and talks of the fourth and fifth as the "principal chords either single or struck together, by which the octave was found in the

commencement and close of the key;" and of their "studying nature and paying little regard to art," and so on. Thus has ancient music, Greek, Irish, and Scottish, been illustrated. If Ritson had understood it, he would not have suppressed the names of these philosophers, as I have done; and how far his musical and antiquarian rage might have extended, his ghost only knows.

To proceed now with the subject of Scottish music, as it is called, it will be found no difficult task to trace many Lowland melodies to a Highland source. But to do that categorically, by a comparison of specimens and editions, would involve a far greater space than is here admissible, and demand, also, an extensive collation of airs. Such a criticism would alike require and justify a separate work. Nor will I pretend to give you even a sketch of what I have collected for this end; since there is here little room for more than the general principles. The first thing requisite is to separate those airs which are known to be modern, as well as those which, from internal evidence, proclaim their own origin. Of the diatonic melodies there can be no doubt; but there are many also of a rigidly Scottish character, which bear the marks of modern improvement in their descant, their chromatic intervals, their keys, or their extent. When we have thus freed our present list from these interpolations, it is seldom difficult to trace some of those which are esteemed Lowland airs, to much simpler forms of Highland melodies. By extending this species of criticism, we can also follow the gradual progress of refinement, from the ruder Gaelic style to the more correct, the more delicate, or the more ornamented compositions of the Lowlands. We thus find, as I before said, the foundation of our Caledonian music among the most ancient inhabitants; and, copy or alter as we may, must acknowledge our

debts to the Highlanders, and, of them, to the original Celts. The Oriental basis remains, in spite of the improvements that have resulted from the knowledge of the modern diatonic scale, and from the introduction of ideas or phrases suggested by a better school of music. When Beattie says that the Highland music is utterly distinct from that of the Lowlands, it is plain that he is speaking without a due attention to a subject on which he was careless or uninformed. His opinion will not weigh much with musicians: whatever other influence it may possess.

In conducting this examination, it is necessary also to attend to the changes which have been made in the time, or rapidity of performance. I already said that the Highland melody was often equally a slow vocal air and a lively dancing one; and the same mutations will be found to have happened in transferring the compositions of the mountains to the Lowlands. So common indeed is this diversity of application, that, in examining many airs, it is often impossible to conjecture whether, in the hands of the original composer, the intention was to convey joy or sorrow: whether any given melody was originally adapted to words of a pathetic or of a humourous cast, or merely intended to animate the dance. The effect of association, in this case, is far greater than is generally imagined. Nor is musical expression of so definite and exclusive a character as is commonly supposed; since it can be changed, not only by its union with words of different import, but by mere variations in the rapidity of performance. It is the same for the modes; since rapidity alone will destroy the melancholy character of the minor, as is evinced, very particularly, by innumerable ludicrous and lively national compositions in this mode. Instances without end might be adduced to this effect;

but as a specimen of conversion of character, as well as of foreign plagiarism, it may be sufficient to point out the air known by the name of John Anderson's auldest daughter; sung on the English stage to the ludicrous words of Pretty Maud, in Peeping Tom, and converted, by Andreozzi, to the purpose of the grand march and sacrifice in the opera of La Virginie del Sole. There is a parallel case in the often imaginary concurrence of sound in poetry with the expression of the words. To you, a poet, I need not point out what ought to be known, even to the commonest readers of poetry, since it has more than once been an object of criticism. It will too often be found that careless readers deceive themselves, by attaching to the sound of the words that which truly depends on their meaning, and which would vanish were that changed or not apprehended. He who hears "Camilla skimming along the plain" in a dragging Alexandrine, knows that she is so skimming already; and never did the "hoarse rough surge roar" much rougher music than the "soft strains blown by vernal breezes" do. The "exiguus mus" is indeed the mountain bringing forth the mouse.

I ought here to add, that whatever association of character between a melody and its wedded verse has been established so as to have become a matter of habit, it ought to be rigidly adhered to. However convertible a new or unknown air may be, that property ceases when once its union with a certain mode of performance, as with a certain expression of feeling, has been settled and received. It is rarely prudent even to add other poetry, though of the same tone of feeling, to a national and familiar air; it is worse than absurd, it is odious, to form opposed combinations. This has been a common and most offensive error of many modern editors of our

national airs, and of men whom the ordinary education of common reading and intercourse should have taught what their own feelings and taste could not. Such innovators have often, with an utter disregard of all taste, and equally regardless of the characters long consecrated by habit and association, united the pathetic with the ludicrous, and the reverse. In the same way, they have, with the rude airs of the mountains and the glen, or with the wild and careless lilt of the Highland shepherd, associated the Delias and Strephons of modern pastoral, or the refined lyrics of poets whom I need not name. Thus we are perhaps called on to sing of battles where our lyre has hitherto vibrated to love; and are desired to lament us, in vain, we may well say, to "Corn rigs are bonny." Apollo and Sandy, Venus and Peggy, are contesting for the same bar: and the Bonny Broom wonders to find itself converted into the Lily and the Rose. Peggy is very properly occupied in "mucking Geordies byre," as she has long done. But Cupid can never "shoul the gruip clean" with his golden arrows; and though the "saut tear" may flow from the deserted lassie's ee, to the sweet sounds, or to the ammoniacal gas that steams from the byre, (for it does not well appear which), Tom Moore and Lord Littleton are much more likely to turn up their noses at the company to which they find their lyrics transplanted. More absurd than all, is the union, in some popular editions, of two poems to one air; and these, often of distinct or dissonant meaning or feelings. The best of our melodies have long been married to immortal verse; and woe be to him who divorces them, or who thus introduces a system of abominable polygamy.

Unquestionably, in the simple ballad, where many stanzas must be sung to the same air, the expression of

the melody cannot always be nicely adapted. But the ballad attains its ends by a mutual care on the part of the poet and on that of the composer, that the expression of neither shall be too definite, where the same general feeling cannot be preserved in each stanza, or where there are more stanzas than the melody admits. In this case, at any rate, there is a general adaptation of the character of the one to that of the other; sometimes designed by the original composer, and sometimes by the poet; while, in others, it is the result of habit, of early and continued associations, answering the purpose in view as far as it ever can be attained in ballad music. This it is which we are bound to preserve, and which the tasteless editors, to whom I allude, destroy.

In the same hands have our national airs suffered by the vulgar practice of "harmonizing for voices," as it is called. The ballad is an air for one voice; and whatever harmony it admits, is instrumental. It is not designed for the harmony of voices; and the effect of that practice is to encumber it with a dull, heavy, psalmodic accompaniment; independently of the nonsensical effect which the poetry sometimes acquires from the same cause. The Italian duetto, the dramatic trio, the chorus, and the ecclesiastical compositions in parts, are harmonies designed for voices by the composer, and the melodies are constructed accordingly; no less, though in a less marked manner, than they are in the fugue or the canon. The Flemish glee, so fashionable in England, is, in a similar manner, a vocal harmony. But the ballad glee, (to use such a term,) is an illegitimate offspring, where it would be better, nine times out of ten, if all the under parts were silent: and worst of all are the "Red red roses," and the other wretched contrivances, by which the Knyvetts and the rest of this race seek for applause and

profit from the appropriate audiences which throng round their orchestras and decide on the conduct of the oratorios of Drury Lane. Burns perhaps alone, certainly above all, combined the true feelings of a Scottish poet and a Scottish musician. The adaptations of his own lyrics to the airs of his early affections, present models to the musicians of his country, as his poetry offers examples, that will not soon be surpassed. Had he joined a knowledge of music to that true feeling for his national melody and to that poetry which he so happily united, and had time permitted him, he might perhaps, not only have refined the whole, and separated the true from the false, but have completed that pure association of melody and verse, of which he has left such admirable specimens.

Such is the tenor of the argument respecting the probable origin of the Scottish national music; and it will be somewhat further illustrated in the few remarks hereafter offered on its present state. But as this view is at variance with the whole current of popular opinion, it will be right to examine the foundation on which that rests.

I believe that no one now maintains the imaginary claims of Rizzio, as the founder, or even the improver, of Scottish music. How such a notion ever originated, it would be difficult now to say; but it never could have arisen in the mind of a musician: and it is unfortunate that this subject has been chiefly examined by antiquaries utterly unacquainted, either with the science or its history, and not even aware of what constituted the real criterion of the Caledonian style. In the time of Mary, the diatonic scale prevailed over Europe as in Italy, and the science had then made a considerable progress: nor is it possible that the melodies of the Oriental scale should have been invented by an Italian composer: they

could scarcely even have been tolerated, from the difficulty with which most of them receive a varied or correct harmony, when that branch of the science was cultivated almost to the exclusion of the ornamental and picturesque melody which is so conspicuous in the style that succeeded. Whether or not he added new airs to our catalogue, is a separate question; and if he did, he can only then rank with Oswald and twenty others who have made such additions in a style more or less conformable to the true. Thomson indeed, the earliest of our editors, in 1725, says that he composed "Patie's mill," "Bessie Bell," "The Bush aboon Traquair," "Down the burn," "Auld Rob Morris," and some others which I need not name. But he was grossly ignorant of his subject, and has made greater blunders than even this, which is indeed as random an assertion as it is untrue.

But the imaginary pretensions of James the first to the invention of our national music, are even yet maintained by many who have not bestowed on this subject that critical attention without which it cannot be understood. The whole of this theory rests on an unlucky misinterpretation of a passage in Tassoni's Pensieri Diversi, which has been too often quoted to need repetition. Even that passage is the remark of a mere literary man, which seems to have been carelessly dropt on a subject which he did not understand. Dr. Burney has taken the trouble to examine the Prince of Venosa's compositions, and has shewn that they are insignificant or worthless, while this writer says that he had improved music "con nuove mirabili inventioni." In the very same passage, he says, that this Prince, Carlo Gesualdo, had imitated our James, who had invented a new and plaintive style of music "differente da tutte l'altre." Nothing can be made of this: and it certainly does not assert or prove

the opinion in question, namely, that this monarch had introduced a style of melody into Scotland, or had been the inventor of Scottish music. Carlo Gesualdo's music displays no new and peculiar plaintive style; and consequently James invented none such. The only conclusion to be drawn is, that Tassoni, like the many antiquaries who have puzzled this subject, knew nothing of music as a critic at least. His "Secchia rapita" will not rescue him from this censure; while if, as Pinkerton and Ritson are convinced, he spoke of James VI, who was his contemporary, the whole theory falls to the ground without further effort. Half of the trouble which has attended the history of Scottish music in latter times, and more than half the nonsense which has been written about it, have been the consequence of this idle remark, quoted and misapplied by the loosest of our antiquaries, who seems to have known as little of music as Tassoni himself probably did.

If the opinion is thus without foundation, the internal evidence against it is as strong as it ought to be convincing. Scotland may be proud of this monarch if she pleases; but she need not surrender her claims to a far higher musical antiquity, for the purpose of investing him with an honour to which he has no title. The towers of Windsor were the cradle of his music as of his poetry. James was a cultivated musician, in an age when the diatonic scale was universal, except in Scotland, and when the art and the science had equally and long been established on that firm foundation which has been the base of all the modern superstructures. It is not probable that the existence, or indeed the possibility, of the Caledonian scale was suspected beyond the bounds of Scotland and Ireland, and, probably, Wales; as no traces of it have yet been discovered elsewhere in Europe, at

that, or at any other age. It is incredible that a musician thus educated should have invented melodies in a scale unknown to him; or rather, have invented the scale itself, and when that also was a deterioration instead of an improvement; while its previous antiquity is established by its existence in Ireland, even though the claims of the Highlanders should not be admitted. The thought indeed could never have suggested itself but to persons ignorant of the real character and criterion of our national music. If James had introduced a style into Scotland, or had laid the foundation of the music of his country, it would have been far other than it is; nor should we have had a national music to boast of. Our productions would long since have been swallowed up in the general improvements and progress of the science; nor should we have been able to produce ancient, or reproduce new compositions, which will maintain their distinctive characters and preserve the proofs and marks of their separate and ancient origin, as long as a bar shall remain. If James did compose any airs, he might, if he had so chosen, have adopted the scale he found in his own dominions; and thus, like hundreds in our own day, have made additions to our truly national list. But his merits then would merge among numerous rivals; nor is there any possibility now of ascertaining what he added or whether he made any additions. If, on the contrary, he did more, or otherwise, if he produced such compositions in the regular and perfect scale as should be expected from a cultivated musician, they ought to be produced before his claims to improvement can be admitted. But that age has left us no such relics, nor even any traces of the general music of Europe. Even then they would not have belonged to our national style, but would have only ranked among the illegitimate com-

positions which modern musicians have intruded into the genuine catalogue. If, as is incorrectly said from Tassoni, he had "invented a new and plaintive species of melody," it must have borne the marks of that cultivated school in which he was educated: but even then, in no sense can he be considered as an inventor.

I trust that I have thus redeemed the honour and antiquity of Caledonian music, and deduced it from those to whom it truly belongs, the ancient Caledonians. These are our Celtic ancestors; on whom so much contempt has been thrown, at all times and by all writers, that it is but just to allow them such of their rights as can be established. There is a remarkable feature in their poetry which comes in aid of this view of the origin of our music. I have shewn that it is the character of the ancient Highland melody to be grave or plaintive; it is, in reality, the "mesta e lamentevole" of Tassoni. There is a gravity and a solemnity, even in the pibrach, which only vanishes when the whole disappears together under the hands of the executioner; as he may truly be called. The laments are singularly plaintive; and it is also easy to see that the apparent liveliness so often given to the dancing airs, is constrained, and is the mere effect of rapidity of execution, and of association with the dance. The natural character is generally melancholy: to that they tend; and taking any number of genuine airs, (for the new compositions introduce much confusion into this subject,) it is infinitely easier to render the whole plaintive by a slow execution, than to make the half of them cheerful by a rapid one.

Now this is equally the character of Celtic poetry. They appear to have been a solemn, grave, and melancholy people; "proud, melancholy, and gentleman-like" when rich, and, when poor, anxious, slow, and given to

seeing ghosts and visions. The same character is, I believe, to this day, inherent in the blood of a genuine Celt. The very complexion is that which the ancient physicians called the atrabilarious and melancholy: far different from that of the fiery, truculent, and sanguine Scandinavian. There appears to have been a severity of character prevalent among the Celtic nations; while the Gothic ones were cheerful, even to riot and intemperance. It was not from the Celts, but from the Scandinavians, that the Highlanders derived that love of strong potations and abhorrence of thin drink, for which Tacitus and others have given the Germans equal credit. If Fingal carouses in his airy hall with his misty friends, it is because his bard has borrowed from the feast of Odin: this is the ale and the mead of Valhalla. The Celts also appear to have been a peaceful, as they were a temperate, people; nor is it unlikely that they possessed, in their day, much more merit than we are now willing to allow them. But, being peaceful, they were unfortunately beaten by their ferocious successors, with whom war alone was life, and peace death; with whom it was equally the religion and the business of man. To be beaten is to be despised: and thus probably they have been stripped of many more merits than that which I have now attempted to restore to them. How far the severity of the Druidical superstition may have influenced their character, it is impossible now to say: but it is probable that these were mutually connected as cause and effect. Be that as it may, all the poetry which we can trace to the Celtic branches is grave and gloomy: that which belongs to the Gothic is spirited and fierce, or cheerful, ludicrous, or lively. The former is notedly the character of the Ossianic poetry, whether Highland or Irish, and, generally, of all that has been collected from the Erse

and Gaelic dialects. Gothic poetry must be sought among the Danish writers: the Pictish belongs to it; and, from this source, the low country Scots have inherited that strain of mirth which pervades so much of their popular verse. The very singular and, as they may truly be called, ludicrous melodies of Scotland, seem, in the same manner, to have been the productions of the very people, if not of the very individuals, with whose mirthful songs they have generally been so happily associated.

Pinkerton's opinion, highly respectable as it unquestionably is on subjects of Scottish antiquity, cannot be received on that of its music. He has said that there is no national air older than 1548. The good man nods. On what ground he formed this theory, it would be difficult to conjecture: but it is palpably at variance with every thing that has been here advanced, and is, in every point of view, untenable. Music was a subject, however, of which he had no knowledge; and he may therefore be pardoned and neglected at the same time. But as a critic in ancient poetry, he ought not to have made such an assertion. We cannot say that the celebrated air commemorating Hara law is of the age, 1411, which it records, though even that is probable. But the lyrics of a more ancient date than the one he has fixed, must have been sung; and that, to airs which we probably yet possess; though, from changing the poetry attached to them, we have now lost sight of their real antiquity. Douglas and Dunbar mention airs popularly sung to the words "The Day it dawes," "The Hunt's up," and others; and we know that "The Flowers of the forest," which commemorates the battle of Flodden in 1513, was sung, as were numerous other ballads which it would be quite superfluous to name. While we have to regret

that we cannot now discover the airs that were familiar to our ancestors of even two centuries past, we can entertain no doubt that very many of them are of a far prior antiquity, and that this is true even of the best and most characteristic.

In Wedderburne's Complaynte, many airs are mentioned as then popular, such as "Robin Hood," and "Tam a Lin;" and many dances, such as "the Gossip's dance." But the names have been lost or changed, and, if still existing, as is probable, the tunes cannot be recognised. The first collection of Scottish songs was that of Davison in 1666, containing, among others, the following names: "There Gowans are gay," "Wo worth the time," and "In a Garden so greene;" but it is impossible now to know whether the music of these was Scottish. Cultivated music was known in Scotland, then and before that time; and though Dunbar ridicules the Edinburgh minstrels for having only two tunes, we cannot admit this censure as applicable to Scotland at large. In 1600, and even before, songs in parts were known; for Sir David Lindsay mentions the treble and bass, and the work of Davison was in parts. Long before that, in 1240, Simon Taylor published church music "in parts;" though of what nature the parts were, it would be hard to guess, as this was not the presumed age of counterpoint: but Sir G. Mackenzie mentions the church music of Ælred as known even prior to this, or in 1166. Whatever else may be deduced from this, it will serve to prove that the Scots had the means of altering and improving their national melodies, by means of the new or modern music, for a considerable period backwards. That the Scottish popular airs were ever used in the churches, as has been said of "John Anderson," is an error which has arisen from mistaking the caricature poetry of the Reformation for the

music, misled by the title common to the poem and the air both.

It would require a volume to enquire into the real or probable antiquity of even a small part of our present collection, though we should not attempt to approximate to their real dates. Such assistance as might be derived from their character, would require a perpetual check, on account of the successful imitations which have been produced in recent times. Nor would it be safe, entirely to reject from the class of antiquity, even those which bear the marks of modern science; because many of them have been modified and altered by successive editors or borrowed and garbled by plagiarists. Barring these difficulties, however, we have a guide in that scale which is the base of the real Caledonian melody. The flat seventh, found in many airs of a date even considerably distant, belongs to another school: nor would it now be easy to conjecture when the innovations from a more perfect system of music were introduced. On the other kinds of testimony, it would be impossible here to enter. But, admitting the modern and the ancient which are of a genuine character, alike to the honours of our list, we are bound to remember that every air is not national which has been introduced into a national catalogue. That catalogue has been encumbered by numerous airs of a mixed character, or of none: sometimes by composers ignorant of music, or ignorant of the peculiarities of the style; at others, by the introduction of entire foreign melodies, Welsh or Irish, or by plagiarisms or imitations from what may be called the Italian school.

It cannot well be otherwise, when we consider how few know what is the real character of the Scottish music, and with what facility every young lady who knows the secret of the black keys, whether she knows that F

sharp is here the major key-note or not, can compose a Scottish air, and when there is always some monthly magazine at hand whence she may extract a few stanzas of poetry. Nor is there a midnight Crowdero of them all who does not think himself competent to the production of a new song as well as of a new reel; as if all the feeling requisite lay in the quantity of the powdered rosin and the vigour of the elbow. The metaphysician is well known who explained the sympathetic resonance of distant strings by concluding that they must have been extracted from the intestines of the same sheep; and if ever a Scottish air shall be jerked out of them by these iron fingers and well-nerved arms, it must be from some similar sympathy which they still feel towards the gowany braes and vales of green bracken where they once roamed unconscious of their future destiny. There is no objection to the introduction of new airs, provided the national character be preserved, and provided they have merit. Quite the contrary. But we ought all to rebel against those who would corrupt our catalogue, since its corruption may be followed by its destruction; as much as against those who should vitiate the style of the Celtic poetry by modern inventions. If Oswald may be permitted, that is not a reason for a general license; any more than that Macpherson's success (be that such as it may) should afford an opening to any school boy who imagines that he can produce Ossianic poetry.

In a great number of instances, while new airs, having little or no claim to a genuine Scottish character, have thus been introduced, many of the ancient ones have been refined or altered from the originals, sometimes so as scarcely to be recognised, at others to nearly the extinction of their peculiarities. The increased use of the violin and of keyed instruments, has here aided

the musical phraseology acquired from a more perfect school. Thus a more florid melody has been sometimes engrafted on the original ground, or passing notes have been introduced, or parts supplied, or irrelative transitions suppressed; while, in some cases, an entirely new air has been constructed out of some of the most characteristic passages. It cannot be denied that we have thus often gained from the taste and science of modern composers; nor, that we have often made valuable acquisitions, even when the genuine character has nearly or entirely disappeared or been abandoned. But there is a stage in this process at which they can no longer with propriety be retained on a national list, though commonly known by the name of Scottish songs. Far more are we bound to reject the numerous tasteless, as well as incongruous, compounds, that have been produced under this name, and the vulgar and flimsy compositions which Vauxhall and the English theatre have introduced into our catalogue, to its corruption and reproach. Our own countrymen are here to blame, for entertaining and adopting what they were bound both from taste and honour, to disclaim. It is unfortunate, yet I fear but too true, that musical taste and science both, are but scantily diffused through Scotland; and that while many tasteless and worthless compositions have been cherished, many of the most ancient and characteristic melodies have fallen into comparative oblivion. We have had, and still have, musicians who know what is right; but, as is well said, those who live to please, must please to live; and thus the popular current hurries along those who dare not resist.

Not to enter seriously upon a list which would require pages to discuss, even in the most superficial manner, we have reason to suppose that the rude and simple Gaelic airs which have been collected from the mouths of an-

cient crones and shepherds,' and, in the Lowlands, from the kimmer at her wheel, and the chronicling carle, are of the most remote antiquity, as are those, of course, which have been modified from them. Some are of recorded age; as would be many more if we could safely transfer the name of the song to the air also, and prove their ancient association. The musical character of the present "Flowers of the forest," will indeed, scarcely allow us to give it the same date as the poem; but "Hey, Jenny, come down to Jock," may probably be safely referred to 1590, or thereabouts, as a minimum date; as may "Kind Robin looes me" and "John Anderson;" since it is said, though falsely, that these were then used as ecclesiastical airs. "Tak your auld cloak" and "Up in the morning early" appear at least as old as 1600; and, to about 1660, we can trace some of our best airs; such as "Waly Waly," (though containing a flat seventh in the melody,) "Allan water," "Kirkconnel lee," and even, as it is thought, an air of a much more modern aspect, "The last time I came o'er the muir.' It is said, in the Highlands, that "Lochaber no more" was the production of an English officer there in garrison, in William's time: but it has been found in a manuscript collection of 1690, under the name of "Tow, to spin;" so difficult is it to trace this matter. Martin assures us that the Sky men had composed many "taking tunes" in his day; but he has not named them. But I must pass from this subject: only further noticing, that many of our most favoured airs, such as "Roslin Castle," "The yellow-haired laddie," "Tweed side," and so on, were the produce of London, early in the last century; though composed by a Scot, Oswald, and equally claiming a place on our list from their merits as from the native land of their author. Let Mr. Hook, with his "Edinburgh town," his "Deil tak the wars," and so on, Mr.

Billington with his "Auld Robin Gray," Mr. Ross with his "Mary," and many more whom I have no room to name, take their places, whatever their merit may be, where those are due; but it is right that our countrymen should know what it is which they are admiring, and to what they are beating time, with head, hands, and feet, when they are vociferous in the praise of Scottish music.

But thus do national affections and partialities blind us all, in other things than music. Our countrymen have deservedly been ridiculed by Ritson, and with more justice than common, for mistaking modern and London Grub-street poetry for Scottish and ancient, just as they have supposed Mr. Hook, triumphant under a cocked hat, Coryphæus of the blazing orchestra of Vauxhall, to be a Sandy with his crook, reclining on the broomy banks of Yarrow. They might as well have imagined the cascade of that mountainous region to have been the Coire Linn. Much of the most popular of this ballad poetry was ushered into the world by Tom Durfey, from the dingy garrets where it was hatched; and, from parallel garrets, proceeded the similarly popular and "ancient Scottish" airs of Wilford, Cottrel, Carey, and others, as well as those of Oswald. Tytler, the discoverer of King James and Tassoni, discovered also the high antiquity of these. Had Ritson been a musician, he would not have let him escape so gently as he has done. Let our countrymen also remember that when they are dancing to many a lively air, or sighing over many a tender one, for the honour of Scotland, they are lavishing their affections on Wales and Ireland. If Paddy is sometimes a little masqueraded by having been robbed of his shilelah and his great coat and dressed up in tartan sheen, he still twangs of the Emerald Isle; and though Robie Burns may chuse to grieve on a desert shore to the tune to which

Phelim O'Raffarty gets drunk in a pot house, it is but the horse-stealer who clips the mane, paints the white fetlock, and galls the withers; while, at the first note of the trumpet, the bold dragoon pricks up his ears, joins the charge, and betrays his origin.

It has often been said, in censure, particularly by our neighbours beyond the debateable land, that the Scots are absurdly attached to their own music, as they are, in every thing else, outrageously national, and that they are insensible to that which is more worthy of admiration, as belonging to a far higher school of art. There is, or at least there was, a certain degree of truth in this remark, and that not very long ago, even in the capital. How true it is of the country at large, every one knows. But the current of fashion has for some time been setting another way: and it is now not unusual to perceive, among some real feeling of the merits of the German and Italian schools, an affectation among our countrymen, of disclaiming that taste for which they have been ridiculed, with a pretended admiration of what they are not yet able to comprehend. The tender damsel who once sighed her soul out to the "Health of those far awa," will only grieve now with Elvira, "in choice Italian." Formerly, she "Loved na a laddie but ane," and she would have wept "Gin her hoggie died;" but her "amore" is now a "scaltro pargoletto," her "catene" are no longer of good broad Scotch, she condescends to weep only to "lagrime," and can only rejoice to the tune of "felicita." There was a time also when Jockey never made love to Jenny without exciting her sympathies; but they may "buckle to" now as they list, since no other "nozze" than those of Figaro, no "matrimonio" but that of Cimarosa, have any charms for her.

It is sufficient, however, to introduce a jig or a reel

into the finest symphony that ever was written, to detect these pretensions. Jenny Nettles or Tulloch Gorum are the horn of Oberon; the features that had collapsed into a leaden melancholy under the finest adagio of Haydn, or had been lost in unintelligent wonder at the most ingenious and picturesque of Beethoven's allegros, immediately start into life, and every plume and head waves and nods in responsive feeling. This is a false and misplaced pride: it is to disclaim their country from the hope of ill-founded praise. There is room to admire both styles; nor is it any proof of real taste, (far from it,) to be really insensible to our national melodies. Old Caledonia has much to boast of. The style of her music, it is true, is such that it allows not of that extension or improvement which is inherent in the musical system of the modern school. It is long since completed, and we can only add to its specimens; scarcely perhaps that. Yet, as a nation, Scotland possesses a truly national melody, and a most ancient one; perhaps, (including Wales and Ireland,) the only national melody of Europe. It is one which, in point of antiquity, has few rivals; and that antiquity is highly reputable. Its remote origin is not less so; while it forms an important part of our history and of our descent, of our ancient pursuits and of our ancient manners. So far also from being deficient in merit, it is full of beauty, though that is of a peculiar cast. The music of our native hills and glens is not contemptible, because that of the refined and Italian school exceeds it in grace and in variety, in power and resource. If it has faults of style and taste, still these faults do not extinguish its beauties. The humble flower may rear its lowly head in the forest; the daisy ceases not to be lovely because it grows near the rose and the lily; and the violet does not lose its perfume because the east and

west send us their armies of splendid exotics, because the breeze blows from the orange grove or the tuberose. With all their faults, it is impossible to refuse praise to the melodies of Scotland. They are often highly pathetic, even when separated from that poetry with which they have been so judiciously combined. In the humourous style, they frequently excel even more; nor can any thing be much more happy than the adaptations of these to the lively or ludicrous verse with which they are so often associated. I do not profess myself a great admirer of the "fortem Gygen fortemque Cloanthum" of "Fy let us a' to the bridal;" but it cannot be denied that the bridal of the music and the poetry is most appropriate. The Sandy who bids "Farewell to his auld wife wi' bum bi berry bum," vulgar as the air may be, and Burns with his "Wife of my ain," need not study Gretry on musical expression: nor do I know how the disconsolate damsel who is verging on "no particular age," could have lamented the tardiness of the suitor tribe better than to the tune of "Forty good shillings."

If, with all their monotony and their defects, the Scottish melodies are not exceeded, or rather, not equalled by the compositions of any age equally ancient and equally rude, they also contain stores of combinations, which may offer, and have offered, hints to the more refined schools of modern times. It is only to be regretted that those whose education and feeling render them competent judges of the subject, do not lend more of their assistance towards maintaining these relics of our musical antiquity in a state of purity; that they do not use their efforts to preserve and refine the national taste, instead of leaving it in the hands of those whose deficiencies in these respects tend rather to degrade it. Though Scottish music differs from cultivated, it pos-

sesses a character well worthy of being preserved, and is in much more danger in the hands of ignorance than refinement. Those who know music best, know best, also, how our own ought to be appreciated.

Had even the music of Caledonia no separate merit, it highly deserves care and preservation, on account of that with which it is connected. It forms, as I just remarked, no small portion of our antiquities: it is no small evidence of our ancient civilization, in a certain sense; for, like poetry, it is the language of the heart. It forms a part of the history of our former manners and feelings; nor is that an unimportant one. It is an index of the former state of society; and it is peculiarly associated with our early literature, for that literature is our poetry. Many efforts are now making to preserve, or to restore, what is fading of the national recollections of the Highlands. No one can approve more than I do, of the general principle; not even yourself. Be the faults and follies that arise from excess of national attachment what they may, and whatever ridicule may be cast on the modes by which it is attempted to gain this object, we shall all have reason to regret the day when a Highlander or a Scot shall become a citizen of the world, a philosopher without a country. I have said elsewhere, that this is not likely to be attained by attempts to perpetuate, either the dress or the language. Neither of these at least can operate on him who is already separated from the land of his birth: on him who is wandering the world, or half naturalized to the plains of India. He can neither speak the language nor wear the dress; but, with his native melodies, he can preserve the vivid recollections of former days, and, like the Swiss, long for the hour that shall restore him to the "land of hills and dales and plaids," to the margin of the bright lake or the sound of the rough

waves where once his heart bounded to the "White cockade" or swelled to the melody of Ballandyne's braes. Nor can any collateral evil or inconvenience follow these efforts to preserve our music: they are open to none of the objections which have been urged against the preservation of the language, nor to any of the difficulties which attend the revival of the mountain dress.

Were it only for the abstract beauty of those relics of verse which are thus rescued from oblivion, the preservation of a national melody would be desirable; for that these are preserved by such an association, there can be no doubt. Nor is it a small part of the merit of such a music, that, like the poetry of a country, it preserves and cherishes our patriotic associations, and those social and generous feelings which it is so desirable to maintain, to cultivate, and to perpetuate. If the noble lyric of Burns on Bannockburn can rouse the heart of the reader, not less will his eye lighten in the field and his arm be nerved by the melody with which it is now united in all our recollections. And the Highlander whose feelings beat responsive to "Lochaber no more," will still hold to the blue hills of his birth, and rouse those energies which may preserve him from the laceration of his best affections in bidding adieu to his native shore. Let us not hear of the trivial faults which flow from the excess of national pride and attachment; but cherish, and preserve with care, all that can make us cling to the homes, the deeds, and the attachments of our ancestors.

It is a far different thing to fall into that extreme, of which the Scots have, and with justice, been accused, of an exclusive attachment to their own melodies, and an insensibility to, or contempt for, cultivated music. It is difficult for those who are not in the habit of analyzing their sensations, to discriminate between the effects of a

simple impression and those which arise from association. Neither would it be easy to persuade a strenuous admirer of all that is called Scottish music, and which has sometimes but little claim to that honour, that his admiration is commonly indiscriminate, and is derived from prejudices and early associations, rather than from a distinct feeling of what he esteems the perfection of music. In many cases, that too is founded rather on the poetry than the melody: and, by aid of the exquisite lyrics so often attached to them, have many of these compositions attained a celebrity to which their own intrinsic merit never could have entitled them. But it is not the Scots alone who forget that music, like poetry, has a wide meaning. The bagpipe has its merits and its beauties; but if these are distinct from that of the hautboy or the violin, so are its strathspeys and its pibrachs from Don Giovanni and the Stabat Mater of Pergolesi. The educated musician can find reason to admire both; as it is the cultivated reader alone that can appreciate both Chevy Chase and Paradise Lost. The vulgar, in both these cases equally, are unable to raise their minds to the higher level, while the refined can look down on the lowest. The former are limited, in their apprehensions of poetry and music alike, by their capacity or by their acquisitions; and as ignorance and conceit are always united, they treat what is beyond their understanding with a contempt which the educated do not retort on the subjects of their exclusive admiration. To comprehend the higher departments of music, cultivation is no less necessary than it is for the higher classes of poetry: but it is a truth which the vulgar in music forget, as if their narrow comprehensions were the measures of excellence in this art. Let the patriotic Caledonian therefore enjoy his Tibby Fowler and his Roy's Wife, for they merit his

affection; but let him remember, at the same time, that the feeling of Mozart, the vigour of Handel, and the variety of Beethoven, are as yet beyond the sphere of his comprehension. Let him not, in his exclusive admiration, imagine that his own music is the standard of all excellence, any more than is his native poetry. "He's a terrible man John Tod," but he is wide of Alcæus; nor let Sandy and Donald forget that there is one shelf for Homer and Haydn, and another, for the melody and verse alike, of "Aikin Drum."

LOCH SHIN, LOCH MERKLAND, THURSO, HOUNA, JOHN O'GROAT'S HOUSE, WICK, HELMSDALE, DORNOCH, TAIN, CROMARTY.

SINCE sheep have found their way to those pastures which black cattle and men once half occupied, this country is one wide and waste solitude. These, its only tenants, are invisible to an unpractised eye. Where three or four shepherds with their dogs can take charge of a district of twenty miles in extent, their huts occupying some secluded glen on its outskirts, it is not surprising if we wander for days without seeing the trace of life; solitary as if in the sands of Africa or the immeasurable ocean: "far from the busy haunts of men, and herds," alike. If, as I once said before, there is no solitude where there is a tree, there is scarcely a bush to enliven the desert through the whole interior of Sutherland. He who has traversed this dreary land alone, will even enhance on the aphorism, and say that there is no solitude where there is a mountain, a lake, or a river. We personify the mountain; it is an object at least on which we can fix our attention, often our affections. In the lake and the river, there is vivacity, brilliancy, something which communicates the feeling of life, of an internal principle of motion. These too are the favourite haunts of man; and we can fancy them inhabited, though we see not the traces of habitations. Hence it is that the wildest wilds of Perthshire do not produce that sense of solitude which is found in this part of Sutherland; where

all around is a monotonous waste of brown moor; unenlivened by a river, and unbroken by other hills than tame undulations without mark or feature.

The traces of former times, of existence that has disappeared, which may chance to cross the path which we are with difficulty exploring over these wild and boggy wastes, only serve to increase those feelings of melancholy and desertion which no energy of spirit can dissipate. Of all solitudes there is no solitude like that of ruins; nor is their effect ever felt more strongly than in meeting the dilapidated remains of villages which occur in our wanderings over this vacant and void territory. The solitude of the forest is solemn, it is often soothing: that of the wide expanse of hill and moor and heath is at least impressive; that of the desert and the ocean is sublime; and, amid the solitude of mountains and valleys, the forms of grandeur and beauty seem, themselves, to people the wilderness with objects that speak to the imagination. These are the solitudes of nature, and they are expected; if they remind us of man, it is only of man as not yet the tenant of a newly created earth. A world still waiting for its inhabitants conveys no images of melancholy: rather, it excites the pleasures of hope. But the solitude of ruins is the solitude of art, not of nature. It startles us with ideas of destruction, it excites feelings of pain. In contemplating the untenanted habitation, the ruined and grass-grown walls, the cold and abandoned hearth, we are struck with images of misery and death. It is this which makes the narrow grave, mean object as it abstractedly is, a solitude of solitudes. If there indeed be a solitude like that of the grave, it is the city of the plague, the empty house and silent street. It is silence and death; but only because it once was life and motion.

I had abundance of time and opportunity to meditate meditations like these, more than once during my solitary wanderings in this country. It is well to be able here to "chew the cud of such sweet and bitter fancies;" for, in good truth, there is little else to chew. Thus, for example, did I reach Loch Shin. It had been a long, tedious, vacant, dreary, unideal day; one bog succeeding another bog, one stone, one rush, one bush of heath, being like every other one, and even the very sky standing still, as if it scorned to smile at any thing. I was reduced also to the society of a person whose company is like that of every one else: good, when he chances to be happy and so forth; but the worst of all possible companions when he happens to be otherwise; as it is impossible to get rid of him.

As I descended the brow of a long and dreary mountain moor, where nothing but the brown heath intermixed with scattered fragments of grey rock had for many miles met my view, there began at last to appear the traces of a brook; in some places dried up, in others struggling with difficulty in twenty channels, through black peat interspersed with scanty tufts of rushes and coarse grass. This was the only guide to the only path which existed; if that could be called a path where a thousand fragments of sheep tracks were seen crossing each other in all directions, and where, after a few yards of dry ground, or a narrow line of black, plashy, peat, stagnating among huge stones and intersecting, like a ditch, the uneven and impracticable mixture of bog and rushes on each side of it, all traces of a road were at every instant lost; leaving me again to try where it might be recovered next. But the descent soon began to increase in rapidity; the ground became drier as it was more easily drained; the brook assumed somewhat more of the form

of a stream; and the path, now becoming more decided, was edged by lumps of scattered and green turf. By slow degrees these symptoms of human existence increased; and the downward track, still wider and greener, and at length skirted by detached spots of pasture among the heath, promised in no long time the sight of human habitations. Shortly, a stray horse appeared, perched on a knoll more verdant than the rest, gazing at the intruder, who now began to accelerate the wearied paces that promised a speedy termination of his labour. The sun was just gleaming beneath the cloud of approaching evening; the brook, now increased to a river, brawled along its pobbly bed, over which a few scattered birches were bending their light foliage; and marks of the plough were seen in the green ridges that rose in a gentle slope from its banks. The village was now close at hand; for a few broken enclosures began to appear, and the top of an ancient ash, gilded by the last rays of yellow light, hung with all its drooping branches over the high bank which still intercepted the view of the houses that occupied the well-known green hollow, waiting the traveller's arrival. I turned the last angle of the winding path, and the village was in my view; a shapeless heap of black ruins. All was silent and dead: the turf was still verdant; but the ancient mazes in the green "for lack of tread were undistinguishable." These are the former hamlets of the idle and useless population of the hills: the people have been moved; but that affords little consolation to him who is thus left to struggle through these empty wastes. It is easy for a fat and well-fed London philosopher to satisfy himself in his closet with politico-economical consolations on this subject; but these offer little comfort to the unfortunate wight who is thus bemired, behungered, bewildered, and benighted, in the

wilds of Sutherland. He wishes the sheep and the sheep farmers at Jericho; and, if, as is likely, he is not an economist, writes a romantic lamentation on the subject, bottomed on the economics of Goldsmith's Deserted Village.

Loch Shin makes such a formidable figure in the map, that it is natural to imagine it a kind of Loch Lomond, as I did. After all, however, it is not worse than the long, dreary, dull, tail of Windermere; and that does not want its admirers. In point of size, it is a remarkable piece of water, being fourteen miles long; yet it is little better than a huge ditch; without bays, without promontories, without rocks, without trees, without houses, without cultivation: as if Nature and man had equally despised and forgotten it. At the western extremity, however, it acquires a portion of that character which belongs to the next lakes, Loch Geam and Loch Merkland; the lower hilly land which had before bounded it, being now replaced by the skirts of the mountains of the west; among which Ben More Assynt is pre-eminent. The height and rudeness of the mountain boundary, compared with their limited size, render these lakes striking; and would place them in no mean rank, were there any wood to give them some portion of ornament. This chain affords an extensive tract of water communication between the east and west seas. Had the canal speculators of former days known of it, they would not have waited to ask what commodities Laxford and Dornoch might have had to interchange; and the Sutherland canal might have taken its place alongside of the Caledonian, the Ellesmere, the Croydon, and a few more, which have served the same purpose as the conjuring rod of Herman Boaz; transferring from pockets too full, into those that are always open to re-

ceive the superfluities of others. But, like a tired horse, I am approaching my journey's end, and hurry on to Caithness.

Since my expedition from Tongue to Thurso, the name of ford, has been so strongly impressed on my imagination, that I cannot even open the Merry Wives of Windsor without thinking it all over again. I have a great respect for the commissioners of roads; but the commissioners of bridges, I hold in veneration. Whoever shall build four bridges between Tongue and Thurso, deserves to be deified. I have met no rivers like these rivers, and no fords like these fords. A Highland ford is really a serious grievance, even at the best; but when there is added to that, a storm and a spate, which may catch you unawares and perhaps lock you up between two rivers, or may drown you if you have more courage than wit, it is then I wish that the Caledonian canal had been turned into bridges; and that instead of one huge bridge for ships over dry land, the worthy projectors had given us two or three hundred smaller ones over these vile waters. The engineers and contractors would have been equally enriched, and the annual report would have looked quite as well when more money was demanded.

The suddenness of these floods is no small evil in addition. If you set out in as fine a day as was ever seen, it is only for a shower to fall, perhaps twenty miles off, and you are fixed; here or in the Loch Carron road, or on twenty more that I have had the fortune to travel; it is all alike. As to the Spey and a few others, they are sometimes so sudden and quick in action, that you may be caught in the middle of the stream, quietly counting the next pebble that you are to step on, and be floated off like a fir log before you have time to hear the torrent coming. Have I not seen a stream that might have been

poured out of a tea-pot a minute before, run through the middle of a herd of cattle, and after drowning one or two, separate the army into two divisions, so that it was three hours before they could join again. I have forded the half of them, the Dee, and the Don, and the Spey, and the Tumel, and the Garry, and the Tarff, and the Hope, and the Lyon, and the Strathy, and the Naver, and the Earn, and the Gowar, and the Tilt, and the Geonly, and the Roy, and the Spean, and fifty more, with and without names; and if I had my choice, I would choose, like the old Highlander, "to go round by the brig of Stirling."

I know nothing that so completely deceives a raw traveller in this country, as a ford; particularly if he is not philosopher enough to calculate, a priori, that weight of water is as good as velocity, and that when his foolish carcase is immersed, it has no weight of its own to hold by. And then, as he looks into the water to see the pebbles, he soon begins to think that the land, instead of the river is running away; if on foot, losing the little wit he had on entering, and if on horseback, tumbling off. As to the varieties, what with muddy water that you cannot guess how far the bottom is, or brown peat water, which is just as bad, or soft mud, or quicksand, or a bog to enter or go out by, or both, or a high slippery bank to climb, or alders and bushes to force your way through, or deep pools to tumble into, or huge rocks and pebbles to tumble over, you may take your choice; and the end will be again, "to go round by the brig of Stirling."

So much at present for the natural history of fords. Though it had rained all sorts of rain the day before, the Post averred that all the fords would be passable, that the water would be run out, and that we might reach Thurso to dinner. Who was to be trusted for the Thurso

road if it was not the Thurso Post. We got through the water of Borg well enough. And then it began to rain again; as if this country was not odious enough in fine weather. But when I arrived at the banks of the Naver, I saw a river as broad as the Thames at Blackfriars, running mud, "majestic" enough, yet very "dull;" so that whether it was five inches or five fathoms deep, I did not know. Nor did the Post. As on other occasions, it became my business to guide the guide. I trust that it is for the last time. I hope never to ford the Naver again.

Pennant, I think, says that there is here a tower on a promontory, Borve, named after Torquil, some Norwegian chief; but I saw nothing but rain, and sand, and wind, and rabbits, and rocks. There are other tales about this country; but the fords of the Strathy and the Hallowdale washed out of my memory what the Naver and the Borg had left. I have seen sand, and rocks, and sea, often; but never as I saw them here. The country was blown away to the very bones. The rocks were high enough to have protected the land, if that had been possible. But the wind had skinned it in spite of them, and nothing was to be seen but red cliffs surmounted by a desert of sand through which the rocks lifted their heads at intervals, beyond them a blackening sea breaking in a roaring surf, and above, the clouds collecting in leaden masses as if to display this frightful white and red coast to more advantage.

But as to its qualities for a road, this was perfect happiness to what succeeded; an interminable hill of bare peat, cut into ten thousand black ravines and ditches, without trace or track, or footing for man or beast. I have seen many roads without bridges, but I never saw a bridge without a road before. I suppose it was placed

there to prove that this was, what was called the high road to Thurso. A name is worth something: but this was very much like the rest of Mr. Arrowsmith's Highland roads, which intersect the country in all directions as if they had been surveyed by Telford and paved by Mac Adam, but were never seen or heard of by mortal man except the apprentices who work at his long table in Soho Square. Nevertheless we arrived at the ford of the Strathy. The Post vowed that it was impassable; and, to improve matters, it was blowing a hard gale of rain and wind. I thanked heaven I was not the Thurso Post. How we got across the Strathy, I know not; and I doubt if the Post does: but the Naver was a summer stream to it.

We arrived at the Hallowdale river. It had been raining for three hours, and as the Strathy was worse than the Naver, so the ford of the Hallowdale was worse than that of the Strathy. The Post determined that it was utterly impracticable, and certainly it looked fearful; earthy, red, and foaming, a thundering torrent. But night was coming on, the storm continued, there was not a living creature for miles, we could not sleep on the moor, if we returned to the Strathy it would by that time have become worse than the Hallowdale, and if it continued to rain, we must remain, were it for a week, between these two rivers, and not a house in the whole country. The Post declined the experiment, and I was no sooner in the stream, than I concluded it was my last ford in this world. That I arrived at the opposite bank, is now plain; but when there, I had the happiness of recollecting that the Post was in possession of all my money and other matters; so that we remained like two fools, on opposite sides of the water, and unable to hear ourselves speak from the noise of the wind and the stream, with the further prospect, shortly, of not being

able to see each other. By the aid of a stone, the bag was at length thrown across a narrow part of the stream, What became of the Post he knows best, and thus I was guided to Thurso to dinner. Instead of which, I only reached Reay; by supper-time, but not to supper, since there was none to be had. If I ever ride or walk from Tongue to Reay again, it shall be when the Borg and the Naver and the Strathy and the Hallowdale have been burnt up by the sun; or when there are a road and four bridges, in place of the two delicate parallel lines in Mr. Arrowsmith's map. I wish their honours the Commissioners would make Highland roads on the ground, and not on paper: that they would forbear at least to entice their friends into such traps as this by those pretty little lying parallel lines.

From Reay to Thurso, the country has put on the aspect of civilization; good roads, good houses, and large farms. All the pains of travelling were gone and past: but so were the pleasures; for an uglier country than Caithness, from one end to the other, would not easily be found. In the usual sweeping manner of those who love to generalize, like Humboldt, it is level, or, at least, not hilly, without trees, without enclosures, without roads, except the great road to Thurso, as black and as flat as Bagshot Heath, with cottages as bad as the Highlands, people as poor as rats, corn trying to grow, grass eaten to the roots, and horses, cows, and sheep, all alike tethered, and all whirling round, each in his proper orbit.

Thurso harbour is a very indifferent one. The town itself is sufficiently respectable, and the situation is not unpleasing: but why should I trouble myself to describe Thurso, when you will find it all in the Book. Where you may also find, for aught I know to the contrary,

how, when the people, in the time of Alexander II, complained of the oppressions of their bishop to the Earl of Caithness, his Lordship replied in a pet, "go and seethe him, and sup him too if you like;" on which they put the unlucky prelate into a kettle and made him into soup. Caithness is a Lowland country, in spite of the tartan trews of its fencible regiment; its people were Germans, its Earls were Saint Clairs, it never spoke Gaelic, and it now speaks Sassanach. I think the Highlanders may fairly retort upon the Catti; for with all their maraudings and rebellions, they never made soup of their clergy. And in other matters, there really never was a pin to choose between the two. The feuds of the Sinclairs and the Sutherlands, and the Monros, and others of this northern stock, may rank with those of the western clans in all points and particulars.

I shall not trouble you with any of them; for if you are not weary of these matters, I am. But the land is full, nevertheless, of the records of battles. The Norwegians were eternally fighting here, as well as the Sinclairs and the Sutherlands. But what is a battle field when it is as flat as a pancake: and when the plough too has passed over it. Nature has provided no monuments, and art has made or left none. At Thermopylæ, the monument will be as durable as Nature herself. The bold point of Airdnamurchan yet points to Bloody Bay, the cave still records, and, as long as Egg shall stand, will record, the massacre of the Macdonalds; and even over the flat black plain of Inverlochy, Ben Nevis towers in all its clouds and storms, the imperishable memorial of the brave Sir Ewen and the chivalrous Montrose. But Caithness—Nature has refused to be its poet, and the fame of its heroes sleeps, like their remains, unheard of and unknown. But the Catini themselves are an unpoetical

race. Here was the cave where Darradus saw the Valkyrs weaving the web of fate, and when, galloping off in different directions, each carried away its fragment of the prophetic texture. If they had been half as poetical as the Highlanders, they would not have forgotten what Mallet and Gray have made familiar; and if they had not found the real cave, they would have found another to answer their purpose.

From Thurso to Houna, the country is open and bare; but there was a pleasure in the very contrast, after such an imprisonment among mountains and rivers and bogs. Liberty is a fine thing; and I know not that I ever enjoyed it more than in here feeling that I had a road under my feet, that I could see the horizon, and that I might walk, and run, and ride, in any direction, unfettered by the ninety-nine-fold chains of Stygian bogs and rivers. The physiognomy of this country is quite unlike to that of Scotland in general. A land scarcely elevated above the sea, a long surf on a smooth flat beach, great pools in the middle of close-nibbled grass that smelt of wild thyme and camomile, sand, rabbits scampering about, corn unenclosed, musky and muddy cow-houses, and the white tall steeple of Cannesbay, like a pillar in the desert, not directing the people the way to heaven, but teaching mariners to shun the land. Dunnet Bay is shallow and sandy, with a long ebb, where, after plunging and floundering through drifting sandhills and pricking reeds, you may gallop at the edge of the rolling surf, among fragments of cockles, and razor-fish, and sea weed; and "chase the ebbing wave," but not with printless feet. The headland is an ugly square mass of red sandstone. Not far hence I saw a Caithness forest; and though I have seen what is called the horizontal oak in Wales and Cornwall, I never saw a forest of topiary work before. It was

of mixed wood, of about fifty or sixty years growth, and was precisely five feet two inches and a half high. The surface was so neatly cut, and so compact and flat, that I might have walked on it. I thought it must have required a large pair of sheers; but the north wind and the east have long arms, and Nature was the artist: while the dyke was the scale and the limit, beyond which the winds had said it should not rise. Such a forest, potted, would have been a fortune to a Chinese.

I was bound for Houna Inn. Houna Inn was the hotel and ferry-house for Orkney: there was a beautiful little circle in the map, marked Houna Inn, it was next door to John o' Groat's house, and every one spoke of Houna Inn, and Houna Inn was to be the end of my labours, and my horse had eaten nothing since he had left Tongue, and myself little more, and I expected a hotel like Quillac's. But the road was expended and gone. "Where was Houna Inn." "There." I saw six or eight black cottages scattered about the intermingled waste of corn and sand. I arrived at the worst of the whole. It was impossible it could be Houna Inn; the hotel and ferry-house to Orkney, the hospitium of those who may be detained a week for a fair wind, the beautiful little circle in Mr. Arrowsmith's map. I rode up to the door, and the dreadful truth, as the novelists say, burst on my sight. To the door—neither man nor beast ever rode or walked to within five yards of the door of Houna Inn. He who would learn to value the blackest house that ever Ross and Sutherland saw, must come and sojourn among the Catti; let him come to Houna Inn. The ditch that surrounded it was broad, and liquid, and black; how deep it was I know not, for it had never been fathomed. My pony backed from it instinctively, worse than he would

have done from a Sutherland bog. Three huge lumps of stone formed the access to the door: it was even difficult to step on them without falling in; but he who had fallen in would never have come out again to reveal the secrets of the deep. If I was the Earl of Houna Inn, I would blow it up, for my own credit.

I fear we must give our Ostermannish ancestry the credit of this method of fortification, for I have seen the same in Shetland. If so, the much-abused Celts must have been a polished people in comparison; for, with the one exception of old Stornaway, no species or variety of Highland midden that I ever saw can be compared to Houna Inn.

The affection of a farmer for his dunghill is pardonable; but, in a state of civilization, it is treated, like his cattle, not as his bosom friend: squared and dressed, and trimmed, as is just; and then consigned to its proper station, not admitted into the secretiora consilia; far less into the bosom of the family. In genuine Caledonian land, the "sappy midden" is an object of far warmer affections; exhaling its "steam of rich distilled perfumes" to the morning and evening nose, and occupying the place commonly reserved for the less profitable odours of the rose and honeysuckle. A few proprietors have lately attempted to get rid of this ornament, by compelling the small tenants to remove it from their doors; and where this had been attempted, I remember one "town" where an old lady boasted "that she had cheated the laird, as she had ta'en the midden into the house." In the old village of Stornaway, the inside of the house is the natural and hereditary place of the midden; but were I to tell you how it is accumulated and managed, I should tell a tale little fitting for delicate ears, or noses. Pauca verba, as Pistol says. In St. Kilda, the same manufac-

ture is also carried on in-doors, but with some comparative regard to decency; as the floor is only strewed with the daily ashes of the fire, among which the relics of fish, and birds, and other "varia materia," are suffered to accumulate, till, the depth becoming inconvenient, the Augean heap is carried off to the field, to make room for a new stratum. If we except the pig, man appears to be the only animal who is naturally fond of dirt, and in whom cleanliness, whether of person or dwelling, is matter of compulsion or effort. But I should beg the pig's pardon for the debasing comparison; since he is solicitous about the cleanliness of his own nest, at least.

The stable at Houna, considering that it contained nothing at all, had no positive demerits: a rare case, I must admit. But if, after describing Mrs. Maclarty's kitchen, and after breakfasting, dining, and sleeping at her hotel, I were not to lead you into the stable of a Highland inn of this class, I should be unjust to the fair sex; as it must be supposed that this department, however indirectly, is under the controul and management of Mr. Maclarty, not of the lady. If you should succeed in reaching it, it must be through a pool of mud and water and other indescribables, and it will be fortunate if there are some stepping-stones for yourself: more fortunate if your horse does not trip on them and souse you with the perfumes of this moat. If he is a tall horse, not understanding architecture, he will knock his head against the door-way; and if you have the misfortune to carry a portmanteau, as may happen to single gentlemen, he will stick in the passage and pull off the straps, which there is no saddler to mend. When you get in, you find two or three holes in the wall, for the sake of ventilation; so that, on Mr. Colman's system, he cannot catch cold. If you do not keep an eye on him, you will

shortly find him swilling water out of a bucket, or in the nearest river; and the next morning he is foundered; and so are you. When he does want water, as there is seldom a pail, he is dragged out by the mane to this river; and if he breaks his knees among the rocks and stones, he is used to it; or else his fraternity is; which is the same thing. It is reckoned politic here to suffer the mud to dry on his legs; and to pick or examine his feet would be troublesome. If the thatch is water tight, so much the better. A hayloft is a luxury: and as there is no stable lantern, the hay hangs down among the loose boards upon the candle; but, being damp, there is no danger. The boy goes up to stir it about, and you are covered with dust and chaff. So is the horse: and as he is not wiped down, and there is no horse-cloth, that helps to keep him warm. Since the Scottish reformers pulled down the stalls in their churches, they have probably thought them unnecessary in their stables; but a few saddles and pikes and poles and wheelbarrows and horse-collars, with a stray pig, a hen and chickens, and a calf, serve, at the same time, to wedge him up, and to prevent him from being dull. It is likely that you will object to the society of half a dozen sharp-horned stirks and stots; but what then. If you think it prudent to tie him up, under these circumstances, or because the house is filled with Highland ponies jostling and squabbling and kicking in every direction, there is no halter. You may use your bridle, which he will break; or if you insist on a halter, a rope will be found before to-morrow, and made fast round his throat with a slip-knot; so that it is not unlikely you will find him hanged the next morning. If there is a manger, probably the corn is put into it: but it is either full of holes, so that the oats run through, or so high that he cannot reach them. If there

is a rack, the hay is thrown on the ground: which is a great saving; because he will spoil half of it, and that will serve for his bed. That, with his own produce, is probably the only bed he will get; but being added to the former beds of former horses, it serves to keep him moist and cool. You begin by giving him hay; but as it is made of musty rushes and other matters, he refuses to eat it; expecting corn. But if you begin with corn, as that is musty too, he waits for the hay. It is probable that he will determine which is worst when he is hungry enough. A Highland ostler of this family, is a great enemy to false delicacy: therefore begin your journey by bronzing your stirrups and bridle: it will save remonstrance. When you are about to depart in the morning, you must not be in haste; because your horse is neither fed nor watered, nor is likely to be, until you do it yourself. If he is a grey horse, you will find that he is turned green; and as he will become greener every day, since a curry-comb was never heard of in Mr. Maclarty's stable, the prudent thing is to paint him green before you begin. A whisp of straw might have been substituted, you will think, for the curry-comb: but the knave trusts that the next shower will do as well. The mane, of course, is matted by the fairies; for how else should it have become so inextricable that the fingers of this bare-headed kilted callan will not make it lie in any direction; even in a wrong one. If he possessed the luxury of a comb of either kind, it is probable he would use the one to straighten his own locks, and the other to claw his own hide. When your saddle and bridle are to be put on, you will find that they have been lying in the dirt all night, as there is no peg to hang them on: and, in a well-regulated stable, it is held matter of policy to keep some wild colt or filly loose, who walks about in the night,

trying to purloin the hay and corn of his neighbours, having none of his own; so that if you sleep near it, you are regaled with quarrelling and kicking and stamping all night. But it is time to lock the stable door: yet not till you have paid the breechless lout as much for doing nothing, as, in London, would have polished horse, bit, and stirrups, to the lustre of the planet Venus; and twice as much for musty husks and mouldy rushes as would have procured all the luxuries of Mark Lane and the Haymarket.

Duncansby Head rises to a considerable altitude, red, square, and ugly. It is called Dungsby in the country. Which of the two is a corruption of the other, I know not; but the latter name is likely to be right, with a reference to Houna Inn. I sat down on the shore, as the dinnerless do on the benches in St. James's Park, wishing that a few of the rabbits were roasted; contemplating Stroma, and the Petland skerries, and the Merry Men of Mey, and the fishing boats, and the great lobster magazines, and a squadron of black flies that were coming in from the east in a solid column of many yards thick, at the rate of a million in a minute. How many millions had passed since the morning, and were yet to pass, who shall say. If numbers conferred merit, they might have despised the whole race of Adam. But the world was made for Man; and hence it is that we are so well acquainted with the parentage and policy of the Dungsby flies.

I had almost forgotten that I was near John o' Groat's house, when I was reminded of it by a fisherman who wanted a shilling. When we came to John o' Groat's house, behold, like the lover's tomb at Lyons, no house was there. Who was John o' Groat, where did he live, what did he do, where was he born, married, or buried, when did he

build the house, when was it pulled down, who had ever seen it, whose grandfathers and grandmothers, whose great-grandfathers and great-grandmothers, had ever seen it. Nobody knew any thing, nobody had heard of any thing, except that a piece of green turf, as flat and as bare as the back of my hand, was John o' Groat's house. Why did they believe in John o' Groat; what did they believe of John o' Groat; who had told them of John o' Groat, and of John o' Groat's house; their godfathers and their godmothers. I congratulated myself that I had not come from London to see John o' Groat's house. If the tomb of Ajax and the tomb of Achilles, the Æantion and the Achilleion, had been no more than John o' Groat's house, Jacob Bryant would have had a better reason than he has ever yet shown, for doubting of the war of Troy.

Fame is a strange, capricious, unjust, unaccountable, dame; not a whit more honest and reasonable than her sister Fortune. But of all her vagaries, the immortalization of a hero and a house that never existed is the foremost. After all, it is of no great consequence; for I dare say that Ajax and Achilles have fully as little enjoyment of their tombs in the Troad and their deeds in the Iliad, as John o' Groat has of his house and his fame on the coast of Caithness. It is all, equally, nothing. But you and I must be great noodles to be labouring for fame, each in his several vocation, for posthumous fame too, when here is a name more immortal—at least than mine will be, without any trouble; and only a name; an immortal name without an owner; a vox et præterea nihil, which will nevertheless be heard of as long as that of Erostratus or of Empedocles. It is a very satire on posthumous fame, and on us fools that labour for it. But if all the world is to talk of John o' Groat, and to travel from London to see his house, why need we be provoked that

Fame has given a place in her worthless temple, to the unholy crew, who, if they have done nothing for it, have at least, lived, and breathed, and eaten, and drank. Let the Parisian academies, and the Parisian coteries, and the Universities, and the modern Athens, puff themselves, and interchange sweet flattery to astonish mankind, and let that magnanimous Republic which Voltaire dusted when he shook his wig, persist in telling the whole world of its marvellous abilities till the whole world is fool enough to believe it, and let those who form the several sects of naturalists, and botanists, and whigs, and Greek scholars, and tories, and chemists, agree to puff each other, and let the Chronicle, and the Morning Post, and the Observer, be hired to puff them all; why need we wonder at their success. They have at least laboured for fame in their own ways; and well may the noisy Goddess reward them, when she has here lavished her rewards, for nothing, upon nothing. But let the idea of John o'Groat enjoy the idea of its fame. As Wollaston said long ago, it is now only the five letters of Cæsar's name of which we know, and which we admire; and those of John o'Groat's are as substantial.

The fable of John o'Groat must, however, be told, such as it is. This personage lived in the reign of James the fourth, and was one of eight brothers, foreigners, who had settled in the country, remaining a distinct colony among their neighbours. In process of time these gentlemen began to quarrel for precedency, upon which John, who seems to have been read in books of chivalry, built an octangular house with an octagon table and eight doors; so that each of the contending heroes entered at his own door, and took his place at the same instant at the board of equality: refining thus on the ceremonial of the round table. How such a fable originated, it would

be difficult to conjecture. It is here presumed that John's round table was only an imitation of that of his betters, by whatsoever means this piece of chivalrous usage found its way to the wild shores of Caithness. The ancient Gauls, however, seem to have adopted this fashion very generally, to prevent contests about superiority; an evil which the Highland chiefs guarded against by the use of a Lord Marshal; this being one of the offices of the bard. There was another reason for this usage, that every one was thus at an equal distance from the Salt; which, as an old writer says, was the first and last and centre of all the furniture. In Denbighshire, there is a reputed round table of Arthur's, about as clear now as John o' Groat's; cut in the side of a hill, and having the record of twenty-four seats. But it is said by other antiquaries, that John o' Groat was a ferryman and plied to Orkney. I know not if the whole eight of the Messieurs O' Groats were ferrymen too. But it is not unlikely that Rabelais had heard of them, when he says that "Tous les chevaliers de la table ronde estoient pauvres gaigne-derniers, tirans la rame pour passer les rivieres de Cocyte, Phlegeton, Styx, Acheron, et Lethe, quand messieurs les diables se veulent ebatre sur l'eau." As to the salt-cellar, there is more virtue in it than that which it possessed in the establishment of old Morton, or that of dividing the privileged orders from the tiers etat, which has given rise to so much disputation in magazines and literary gazettes. Salt was always a revered substance: it was the salt of the covenant among the Hebrews: the salt cellar was first set and last taken away, as Plutarch will inform you; it was a symbol of perpetual friendship, and had many other marvellous virtues for which you may consult Homer and Lycophron. It was as ill an omen to spill it in Rome and Athens as it is now in

London and Edinburgh; and the salt cellar descended, in the former city, as a perpetual heir loom from father to son. But this is by the way: in the true antiquarian spirit.

The situation of Wick is rather pleasing; in this country indeed, striking. But the Gazetteer will tell you all that I need not. Cordiner too, has both drawn and described the castles of Keiss, Girnigo, and Sinclair, so that there is nothing left for me to do. The ride, even from Houna, to the southward, is not without amusement, since it has variety; much of it lying on the sea shore. But there are no objects, except these uninteresting castles, and it leaves no impression. We may travel here, and when it is over, forget where we have been. My poor horse, however, will not forget that he could find nothing to eat from Tongue to Cromarty. Nor did his rider fare much better. I hope the starved Catini have made up for the long fast of that black summer.

Berridale forms a strong contrast with all the preceding scenery, and almost recalls to mind again the West Highlands. The station for the herring fishery at its mouth, renders it a lively and busy scene during the season. The castle of Berridale is a very uninteresting ruin. The lofty pass over the Ord becomes entertaining on descending into Sutherland; from the great variety of ground, often of very striking features, over which it is conducted, from its intricacy and the number of separate reaches of the road so often visible, and from the fine views it affords of the sea coast from the Ord to the Firth of Tain, as of the fading and far distant forms of the mountains of Inverness. Though the summit of the land on this ridge, which divides Caithness and Sutherland, is not very high, yet from being the highest land of the country, and from its immediately overlooking the

sea, the effect is grand. It is the more so, that it is not so lofty as to render the inferior objects insignificant. It is sometimes a misfortune, to mountains as to men, to be too far elevated above the common level.

I had occasion to land with a boat under the magnificent cliffs near the Ord, where a party of men, women, and children, were employed on the herrings; while the rocks were strewed with barrels and the shore with boats, and horses were seen scrambling up and down a narrow track in the cliffs, the sight of which made the head giddy. Such are the ports which nature has bestowed on a coast to which the herrings have thought fit lately to retire from the magnificent bays and lochs of the west: hoping, perhaps, that they would not be so easily caught, salted, and barrelled off to feed negroes. But they know not the perseverance of the audacious sons of Japetus; and now, perhaps, that they have discovered that there is no security at Wick, Berridale, Helmsdale, and Cromarty, they may return again to Loch Carron and Loch Hourn.

The herring cleaners received us in a menacing attitude, and with shouts of defiance and offence. We knew very well that they were wild Sutherlanders, while we were civilized Argyllmen; and it is not uncommon to find that one division of the present race of Highlanders has as little respect for its neighbours as the most prejudiced enemy can have for the whole tribe, though they are all confounded under a common term. This is not an uncommon feeling, in fact, throughout the country at large. In Sky, my friend Campbell, who was an Argyllshire man, was considered by the common people as a foreigner; and, because he was a foreigner, they refused to work for him, plundered his turnips, and persecuted him for his improvements. It is well known to what an

extremity they carried this system in former days against the foreign Lowlanders: but they seem always to have entertained the same jealousies of each other; of which these are the relics. So much for the unity of the Highland nation. How should it be otherwise. They always hated each other, and they were always at war. They hated each other more than ever they hated their Lowland neighbours; and while their wars with the latter are all comprised within a very small compass, they were devouring each other every day for four centuries or more. They have at last been forced into something that looks like unity; but it is the amity of cats whose claws have been pared. The truth is, that the Highlanders never were a people or a nation. They were fifty people and fifty nations. Occasionally, they united in parties more or less extensive, as long as there was any joint mischief for them to do; and if they are united now, it is rather by language and habits than mutual regard.

The cause of the impending war was not at first apparent: but the sight of a vessel in the offing with the union jack at her gaff end, suggested to us that we were supposed to belong to it, and that we had fallen in with a race of smugglers. It was too dangerous to expostulate or explain under a shower of stones; and we therefore hauled off and left the field to the enemy.

Hence, the country begins to look like what it actually is; a new creation. Every thing seems fresh, and improving, and busy, and full of hope. There are few shores in Scotland which, for so continuous a space, display so much activity, and life, and promise. We imagine ourselves suddenly transferred to the Lowlands; and the long trailing smoke of the Brora salt-pans, streaming over the sea and widening till it disappears,

reminds us of Preston Pans and Borrowstowness, giving an air of life and civilization to a coast, not long ago among the most solitary and deserted throughout the whole country. Helmsdale, the first of these new villages, is situated in a very romantic situation, at the exit of a wild mountain glen; and its river forms the indifferent harbour, the insufficiency of which is the greatest misfortune of this place; a misfortune, however, which it partakes with all the eastern coast.

The village of Brora is indebted for its activity, chiefly to the coal works, as Helmsdale is to the fishery. The presence of coal in such a country, is unexpected, even to a mineralogist. It has been wrought for a great number of years; but it is only of late that, in consequence of more attention, it has recovered a character which it had lost through neglect. The coal field is, however, very narrow, and the beds are of small dimensions; so that it must be considered an easily exhaustible repository. In a geological point of view, it is a very singular variety as a coal field; but this is a subject on which I am not to enter. Such portions of the coal as are not fit for other purposes, are expended in a manufactory of salt and in a pottery for coarse ware.

I need not tell you that this portion of Sutherland is the seat of the greatest and most conspicuous experiment on the transplantation of the interior population which has been made. To shut our eyes to its success and to its beneficial consequences, is to be hopelessly prejudiced or incurably dull: to treat the experiment with obloquy, is to add anger to prejudice, and ill-temper to ignorance. But, unfortunately, so much of personality has been intermixed with the discussions to which it has given rise, that it is unpleasing to enter on it. Defence or explanation it can no longer require, to those who

have sense to understand and coolness to judge; and, for those of opposite qualifications, that labour would be thrown away.

The castle of Dunrobin forms a conspicuous object, elevated above the shore and surrounded by trees. It is a structure of different ages, and some parts of it are said to be as old as the time of Alexander the second; or about 1100. It was built by an Earl of this ancient and long ennobled family. Excepting Dunrobin, the only antiquities that I know of in this neighbourhood are the Pictish towers; respecting which I have said all that is necessary in the account of Glen Elg.

From the village of Golspie, the ride is pleasing to the Fleet; the same acclivity of hills skirting it to the right, and a flat tract terminating in the sea, to the left. The new mound across the Fleet, is both a convenient and a fine work; superseding a very disagreeable ferry, and promising, at some future day, to redeem from the sea, a considerable tract of land. Having crossed the Fleet, the aspect of the country changes; this portion of Sutherland being utterly distinct in character from all the rest; belonging, as far as its physiognomy is concerned, to the eastern part of Rossshire and to Cromarty. The house and plantations of Skibo remind us of a better country than we had seen for a long time. Hence to Bonar bridge, there is nothing from which I could extract a sentence; and I may fairly say the same of that road as far as Dingwall, bating such little character as is found about Novar, and the views of Ben Wyvis, which are, however, possessed of little interest. Those who choose to pursue the Oikel beyond Bonar bridge, will find it improve; but no one will pursue far, a country which has little beauty or attraction to repay its difficulties and inconveniences. The vitrified fort in this neigh-

bourhood, I have noticed in the former catalogue of these. Yet on this subject, I am still bound to remark that Williams, whose theory of their construction I defended, had misapprehended their objects. He supposed them mere places of refuge or security for cattle, including women and children; not having perceived their military and defensible nature, apparently from not having paid attention to the subject of fortification.

Dornoch has that melancholy aspect which attends so many of those towns which, once forced into splendour and opulence by their ecclesiastical establishments, have been unable to replace the downfall of the church by the pursuits of commerce. But I shall be excused describing what has been sufficiently described by Pennant; whose book, if it is not, ought to be the vade mecum of every traveller in this country. I need only remark, of the burning of the town of Dornoch and the cathedral, in 1570, that here, as at Elgin and in the case of many of our monasteries and churches, demolished in the English wars, the disgrace does not rest on the Reformers; often blamed for what they did not as for what they did destroy, and who have other sins in abundance to answer for.

On the shores of the Tain, or muckle ferry, the country is wooded, various, and pleasing; and, on crossing that ferry and entering Rossshire, it undergoes a very decided improvement, as well in respect to the form of the surface, as to the trees and the cultivation. Indeed there are few tracts of country more pleasing and of a more cheerful aspect, than that between the firths of Tain and of Cromarty; though without pretending to any picturesque character. Tain itself is an insignificant town, and is, like Dornoch, well known, from Pennant.

Whoever is compelled to wait the pleasure of the fer-

rymen who have the monopoly of the Cromarty ferry, will wish them employed in their trade in the regions below. Æschines tells us that if a ferryman overset his boat in going to Salamis, he was dismissed. The Athenians had one good law at least. If I knew the name of the proprietor, he should have a gibbet of his own in these immortal pages. I must not, however, forget that I visited the disputed Cairns at Tarbet Ness. These are fishermen's beacons, says one party. It would be well to know when fishermen erected such beacons as these, and for what purpose. I followed Roy before. The Aræ Finium may be at the Suters, for aught I care. But there is nothing there to prove it; and when it comes to a matter of dispute between the Monk Richard, who apparently never saw the country, and General Roy, who examined it minutely like a soldier and a geographer, it is not very difficult to choose our party.

The entrance of Cromarty harbour is no less safe than it is rendered conspicuous and easy to vessels, by that distinctness of character which results from the height and similarity of the promontories that enclose and form it. The situation of Cromarty is as beautiful as its harbour is secure and capacious. An immense expanse of water, resembling that of the Forth above the Queensferry, stretches far west among the mountains of Rossshire, which, in innumerable forms and tints, bound the horizon. To the north, a shore, at first low, and covered with trees, houses, and cultivation, gradually rises from the eye, till it blends with the higher land that surrounds the Firth of Tain. Beneath a rich wooded hill on the southern bank, forming the highly ornamented grounnd of the Cromarty family, stands the town; neat, clean, spacious, and open; skirting the shore, which is covered with boats, and its pier filled with shipping; while the

anchorage, generally enlivened by northern traders and men of war, adds to the gaiety and splendour of the whole scene. The narrow entrance between the two bluff wooded hills, the Suters, which almost meet and nearly reflect each other's form, completes the delightful picture. Were Scotland what, here, it will probably never be, or were the port and harbour of Cromarty in a more southern situation, it would be the seat of commerce and wealth, and its shores the favoured habitation of the luxurious and opulent. I know not why it may not yet at some future day become an emporium of the northern trade; but that will not happen till the increase of agriculture and of manufactures has accumulated a far larger population in the surrounding country than it can possibly possess for a century to come, and which it is indeed probable it never will possess.

The herring fishery had been singularly successful, and the great resort of the fishermen at present was to this port; which was crowded with the busses that came to buy, thus forming the market, and becoming the rendezvous of all the boats on the coast for many miles round. Every thing was here in full activity, and the gaiety of the scenes on shore and in the bay, added to the beauty of the landscape and the brilliancy of the brightest and calmest of days, produced a splendour of effect, unequalled even by that which I had witnessed more than once in Loch Ransa and Loch Fyne.

There is no interest in the ride hence to Inverness, till we arrive at Fortrose; and as I have now brought you back to a point which we once before visited, I may here terminate the history of my peregrinations on the mainland.

END OF VOL. II.

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